

# VOICES FROM THE COAST

The Collected Stories of Coastal BC  
Community Members Involved in the  
Research and Discussion of Oil and Gas



A project of the University of Northern British Columbia's  
Northern Land Use Institute,  
Northern Coastal Information and Research Program





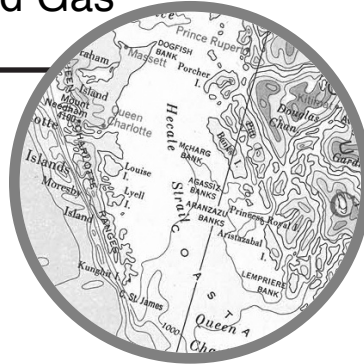
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June 2005

*Funding for the Northern Coastal Information and Research Program was provided by the Ministry of Energy and Mines, Province of British Columbia. This financial support has enabled the publication of the UNBC Community-Collaborative Studies series, and has allowed communities in the Queen Charlotte Basin to be engaged in discussing the issues surrounding offshore oil and gas activities, and is gratefully acknowledged.*

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Community Members Involved in the  
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Prepared for:

**THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA'S  
NORTHERN LAND USE INSTITUTE,  
NORTHERN COASTAL INFORMATION AND RESEARCH PROGRAM**

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June 2005



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# INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTIONS TO THE OTHER PUBLICATIONS IN THE UNBC COMMUNITY-COLLABORATIVE Studies series have typically started at what is presumed to be the beginning: the start of the University of Northern BC's Northern Coastal Information and Research Program (NCIRP) in 2002; or the 1980s, when the moratoria on offshore oil and gas development were first being reconsidered; or, at most, to the 1940s, when the first onshore test wells were drilled in the Queen Charlotte Islands.

This introduction begins a little earlier.

Members of the Community Guidance Group, whose voices you will hear in these pages, held meetings at various locations throughout the Queen Charlotte Basin between December 2003 and September 2004. At one of these meetings – in July aboard the Langara II sternwheeler, docked at the heel of Masset Inlet – the group met to discuss, among other things, its possible futures. During this meeting, a twelve-foot length of brown poster paper was taped to a table and the group was asked to create a timeline that would place the present oil and gas debate in an historical context. The assembled group, whose members came from a diverse range of communities, cultures, politics and backgrounds within the Queen Charlotte Basin, set about recording what each of them considered important – beginnings and endings, experiments, inventions, successes, failures, major regional, national and global events.

The creation of NCIRP fell at the far end of the timeline. The day in 1949 when onshore wells were drilled on the islands was just to the left of that. Way down at the start of the timeline was a graphic depiction of a First Nations creation story and the legend of Pangaea – an ancient “super-continent” said to have included all the Earth’s major land masses, and thought to have begun breaking apart about 200 million years ago. The early geological formation of what is now known as the Queen Charlotte Basin was also placed in this first panel of the timeline. Many and diverse events were recorded from one end to the other of this strip of paper. But there was also a common thread. It is illustrated by a green arrow that stretches across the twelve-foot length – stretches across time – and is labeled, simply, People of the Salmon.

As you read through the stories in this collection, you will discover as many different perspectives as there are people on the coast. There is truly a myriad of voices here, each speaking passionately about their homes, about how to protect them, how to make them grow and how to help them thrive economically, environmentally, socially and culturally. Each of the storytellers here has an opinion about what the future of coastal British Columbia should look like and how to get there. They may not agree on the methods. They certainly don't agree on whether oil and gas development should be part of that future. In fact, the people of the communities of the Queen Charlotte Basin may not agree on much of anything. They may not even agree with being



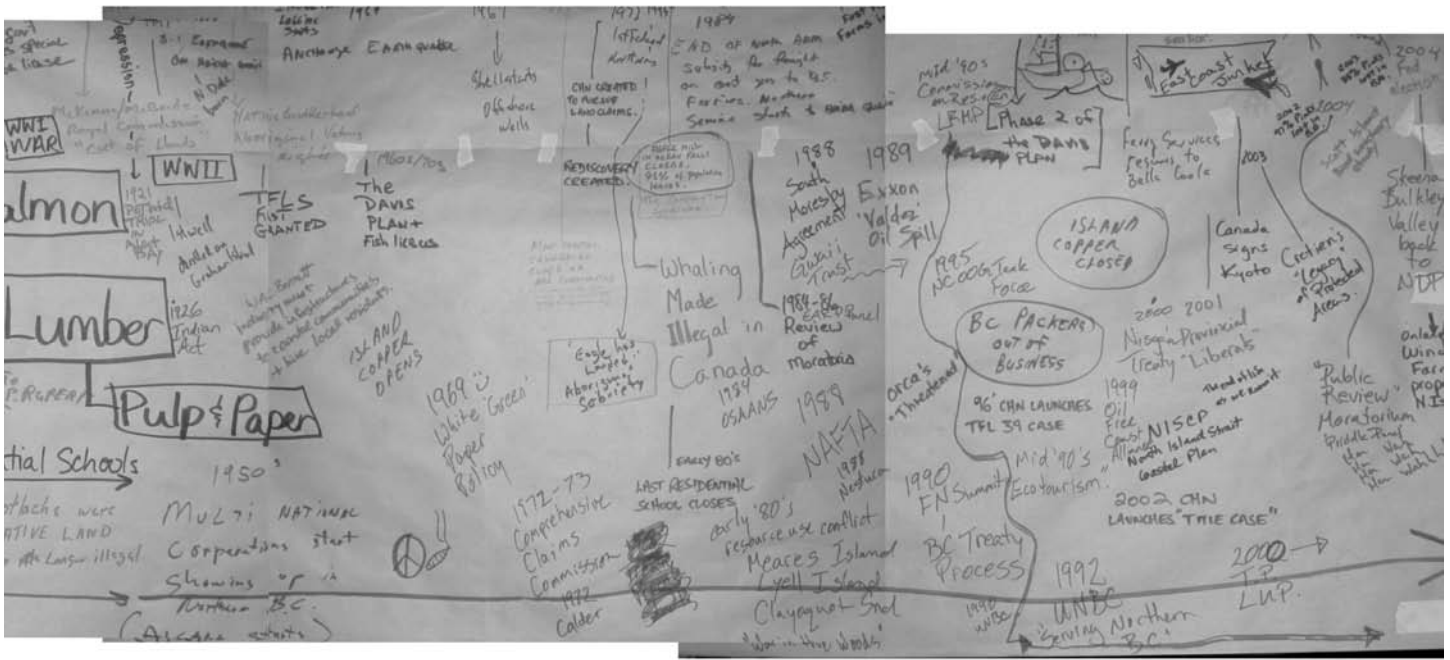
described as People of the Salmon. But they are people of the coast. And all of their visions of the future include a belief in the importance to British Columbia of vibrant and sustainable coastal communities. So in the end they did agree on something. And that was likely the biggest success of this whole adventure.

But first to the official story of NCIRP.

As stated, onshore wells were drilled on the Queen Charlotte Islands – also known as Haida Gwaii – as early as 1949. Offshore exploration in the Hecate Strait between the islands and the mainland began around 1958. A number of test wells were drilled in the late 1960s, including eight within the Queen Charlotte Basin (QCB). None proved commercially viable. In 1972 the federal government put in place a moratorium preventing tanker traffic from shipping through the QCB. A year later the moratorium was extended to suspend all oil and gas activities off the coast of British Columbia. The provincial government placed its own moratorium on offshore oil and gas activities in 1981. In the mid 1980s the federal and provincial governments formed a panel to do a major environmental review of offshore exploration and development. That panel found many gaps in the scientific knowledge about the ecosystems of the QCB and made a number of recommendations to be followed before allowing any development.

Research since 1986 has improved the level of knowledge about the ecosystems of the QCB, and about the potential impacts on them of industrial development. The BC government is now interested in going ahead with offshore oil and gas exploration. It has commissioned two studies since 2001 to look at the potential impacts of an oil and gas industry on the marine environment. The federal government, at the request of the BC government, also commissioned a scientific review of the moratorium by the Royal Society of Canada. All three reports noted there are still significant gaps in the level of knowledge about the marine environment of the QCB that need to be filled. They added, however, that there are no scientific or technological reasons not to lift the moratoria if those gaps are filled.

The Northern Coastal Information and Research Program (NCIRP) was established in 2002 within the University of Northern British Columbia's Northern Land Use Institute. It received an initial grant of \$2 million from the B.C. Ministry of Energy and Mines to "support advancing the state of scientific and other



knowledge, such as socio-economic analysis, for offshore oil and gas in British Columbia.” The program focused on a study area consisting of the waters, coastlines, ecosystems and human communities of eastern Dixon Entrance, Hecate Strait, Queen Charlotte Strait and the many channels, sounds, fjords and other inlets connected to the more open waters of the northeastern Pacific Ocean. Together, and following the term used by government and industry, this is referred to as the Queen Charlotte Basin. The main objectives of NCIRP were to improve understanding of and the level of knowledge about the issues, and to provide opportunities for local communities to contribute to and share in the benefits of information, education and research undertaken in the QCB region. That’s where the Community Guidance Group (CGG) comes in.

Involving communities has been an integral part of all NCIRP projects. It found its most tangible form in the creation of the CGG. The group’s membership reflected the diverse interests of communities in the study area, and it guided NCIRP on matters of research, design, conduct, analysis and information dissemination.

Beginning with the original request for proposals, which required researchers to have extensive experience in coastal communities and innovative ways of including residents in their work, each of the core projects carried out within NCIRP was designed to include significant and meaningful participation from Queen Charlotte Basin community members. For example, the study of “Community and Socio-economic Implications” included a study tour with twenty individuals from communities around the Queen Charlotte Basin meeting with Atlantic Canadian residents to discuss the implications of offshore oil and gas there (generally referred to in this collection as the East Coast study tour). The separate study on “Information, Knowledge and Learning Systems” recruited project team members from every part of the Queen Charlotte Basin. Other projects included partnerships between consulting firms and community-based enterprises. Each project was unique in the way it undertook community collaboration, but all broke new ground and gave local people an unprecedented role in the analysis of key issues about offshore oil and gas in the region. In addition, all of the core studies have recommended strategies for improving the role of coastal communities in any further research undertaken if and when oil and gas exploration proceeds.

Invitations to serve on the Community Guidance Group were sent out in September 2003 to individuals who were known to have an interest in the unfolding issues of offshore oil and gas, and who had knowledge of the physical and social environment of their communities within the QCB. One central characteristic of the group has been that none of the individuals on the CGG has claimed to speak on behalf of their communities or for any other group with whom they are affiliated. Their views on whatever subjects arose were understood to be their personal, albeit informed perspectives. In forming the group, UNBC sought a cross-section of people who reflected rather than represented a broad range of communities, attitudes,



opinions, cultural and occupational backgrounds, and standpoints on offshore oil and gas.

NCIRP Program Manager Norman Dale provides a thorough and entertaining description of what he calls “the CGG journey” – and provides his own thoughts on the successes and failures of the journey – in the concluding chapter of this collection. So I’ll leave it to him to provide the details of the journey, and instead skip to the journey’s “end.”

Following the “future search” in Port Clements, a final meeting of the CGG was held in Alert Bay in September 2004. It was there that the idea for this publication was first discussed. CGG members almost unanimously agreed that their communities could benefit from much more collaborative work. In

fact, you will hear many of them in their stories describe how the offshore oil and gas issue became less the focus of their collective attention and more a catalyst, a rallying point for a growing acknowledgement that what UNBC may have (unwittingly) created was another creature altogether. A “community of communities” was developing wherein regional links were being established where previously there were only tenuous connections. Through the process of meeting to discuss UNBC’s oil and gas research program, the members of the CGG had discovered a deeper sense of the BC coast as a distinct region with a common set of hopes and challenges that would benefit from a more permanent network.

As Dale Lore says in his story: “But the greatest advantage of the Community Guidance Group had nothing to do with oil and gas. The biggest advantage was that, for the first time in recorded history since we stopped traveling by canoes, we traveled to each other’s communities, we ate at each other’s houses, and we developed a network. We never did that before because of the cost of travel. You don’t normally travel from Port Clements to Bella Coola to Port Hardy to Alert Bay, but the fact is their way of life is way closer to ours than other places in BC.... I now have a way better understanding: if there is one thing we really need it is to have is a regional voice.”

“*Voices From The Coast*” was conceived of as a way of contributing to that voice, of recording CGG members’ experiences with the NCIRP program, but also of telling the stories of those closest to the issue of offshore oil and gas so the people in the rest of British Columbia and Canada can start to understand what it means to live on the coast, and what offshore oil and gas might mean to those whose lives stand to be the most affected by it.

There is a long history of oral storytelling on the coast – in both First Nations and non-First Nations cultures. This publication, I hope, follows in that honourable tradition. Except in a couple of instances, taped interviews were conducted with each of the members of the CGG in their own communities. Those interviews were then transcribed and “turned into” the stories you find here. The process of putting their stories into printed form mostly involved smoothing out some of the natural verbal hiccups we all have into a nar-

rative, while attempting to maintain the storyteller's authentic voice. Any failures in that regard can be attributed wholly to myself.

I would like to offer my personal thanks to the members of the Community Guidance Group. Norman Dale in his concluding story describes how the idea of a "guidance" group came to be. He describes a guide as "someone who knows the 'lay of the land' and can help others less familiar navigate the terrain." In that, the Community Guidance Group has succeeded, its members giving generously of their time to guide those of us unfamiliar with their terrain through its complexities. As someone who grew up near the water, but not really on the coast, and who now lives about as far as one can get in BC from the ocean, it was a rare honour to be welcomed into their communities, into their homes, and into their lives. It is no exaggeration to say coastal communities are unique in a province renowned for its uniqueness, and that coastal residents live life to the fullest – indeed, are often larger than life. By being involved in the Northern Coastal Information and Research Program, and through the process of collecting these stories, I feel like I have been offered a glimpse inside those lives. I invite you to do the same by opening these pages and listening to the voices from the coast.

An explanation may be needed for the organization of the stories in this collection. During meetings to plan this final publication in the UNBC Community-Collaborative Studies series, it was often remarked that all the other publications featured maps of the Queen Charlotte Basin, but that those maps rarely mentioned the human communities that called the region home. The emphasis tended to be on the biological, ecological and geological characteristics of the "basin" – at best a geopolitical term to describe a region containing potentially commercially viable hydrocarbons. As you look through this publication, you will find no illustrations of sedimentary basins. Instead, on the next page, you will find a map of coastal BC with CGG members' home communities located on it. You will also notice on that map a dotted line, which starts in Port Hardy, slips down into the Johnstone Strait and the Broughton Archipelago before turning and heading north up the coast to Kitimat and Prince Rupert and then on to the Queen Charlotte Islands/Haida Gwaii. Prior to roads being pushed through to Bella Coola and Prince Rupert (both within the last half century) the only way to get people and supplies into or out of these coastal communities was by boat (or, in the case of Prince Rupert, train).

Those modern supply routes in turn followed historical trading patterns of the coastal First Nations. It was therefore decided to recall and recognize that critical part of coastal history by navigating a "narrative shipping route" in our organization of the stories in this collection – beginning in Port Hardy, one of the newest communities in the QCB, and ending in Skidegate and Queen Charlotte City, many of the residents of which can trace their history in the area back thousands of years.

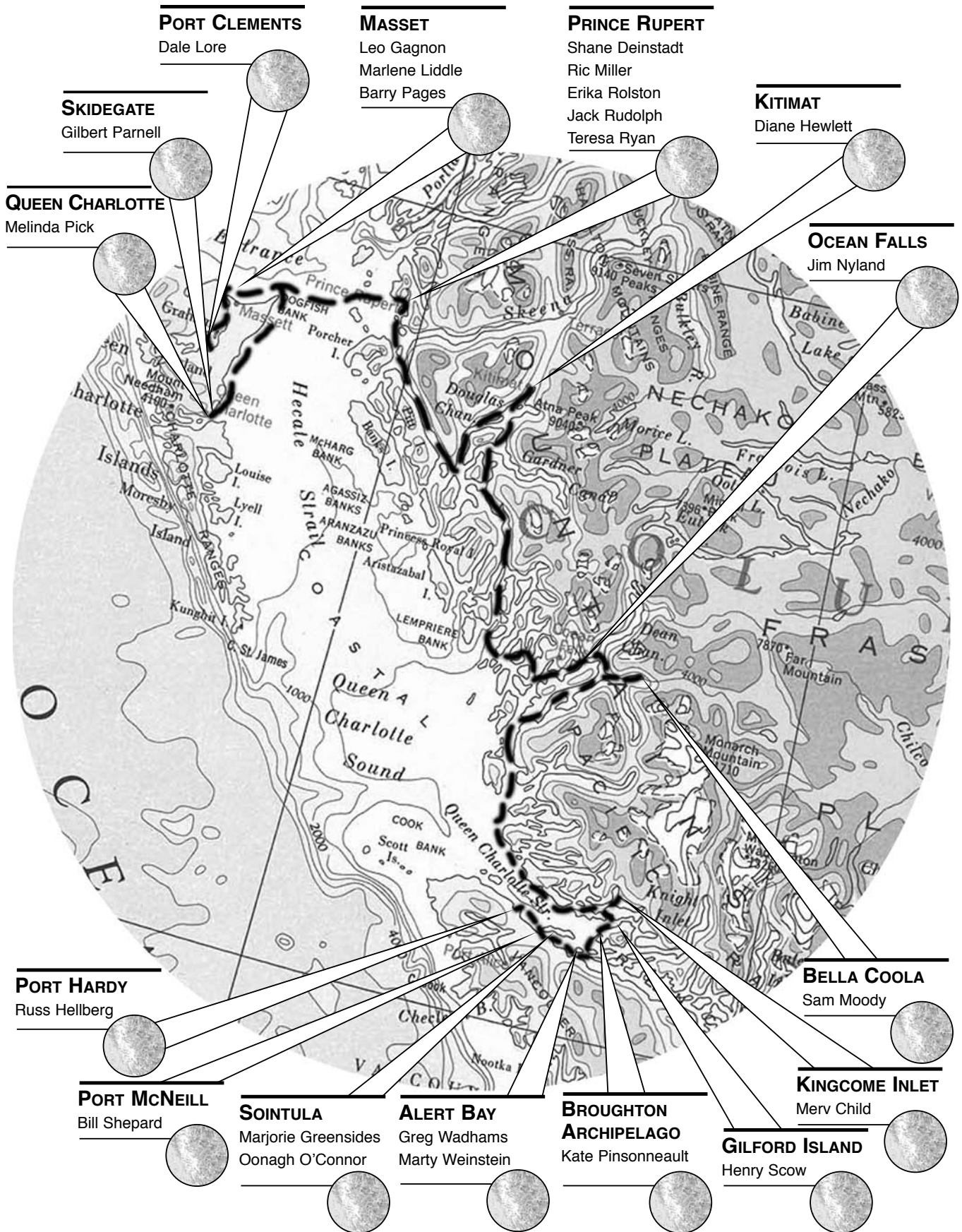
One final note. It didn't take long for a sense of ceremony and tradition to develop within the Community Guidance Group. It quickly became customary at each meeting for a member of the host community to welcome the group, followed by a traditional opening prayer. That prayer was usually led by Sam Moody, a respected member of the Nuxalk First Nation in Bella Coola. And so, it is in a similar manner that this collection of stories opens – with a dedication, a prayer for a safe voyage, written by Sam.



**Cam McAlpine**  
**June 2005**



# COMMUNITY GUIDANCE GROUP MEMBERS AND THEIR HOME COMMUNITIES





## DEDICATION

We come together in unity to share with other communities  
in our territory. We value the traditional wisdom of our ancestors.

We value and acknowledge all information and data shared.

We move forward into the future with a balanced  
stewardship approach that will enhance our efforts  
to establish sustainable development of our resources.

—SAM MOODY  
NUXALK ELDER



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# RUSS HELLBERG

PORT HARDY

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THE TOWN HAS ALWAYS LOOKED AT ITSELF AS BEING A RESOURCE EXTRACTION COMMUNITY, AND IS PROUD OF IT. THE THING WE REALIZE VERY CLEARLY IS THAT COMPANIES COME AND GO, AND WE HAVE TO FLOW WITH THE TIDE.

I LIVE IN PORT HARDY, WHICH IS A COMMUNITY AT THE PRESENT TIME OF ABOUT 4600. It's come from a high population of 6000 in the 1980s. We had the Island Copper Mine close here, which was our main employer, at the end of 1995. It had 500 people that worked at the mine, plus staff, which made about 550 people. When they closed, it was called a model shutdown, because we worked with the company and with both levels of government, and everything worked very well. In fact, it worked so well that, if we hadn't had the drastic downturn in the logging and fishing, this community wouldn't have even known its major employer left. It was forecast to last for twenty-five years and it lasted twenty-four years and eleven months.

They were a great company. The town has no debt, it has modern infrastructure, we basically brought everything up, all the sports facilities, all of our roads – there's some that have to be brought up to present-day standards – the water and the sewer are up to standard. We've come from water that looked pissy, you couldn't see the bottom of your bathtub, to perfectly clear water. The town has always looked at itself as being a resource extraction community, and is proud of it. The thing we realize very clearly is that companies come and go, and we have to flow with the tide. But we always look at the resources that are out there and try to make maximum use of them – by maximum, I mean get the most benefit for the citizens of the community – and try and go for renewable industries. Of course, when oil came along, it's not renewable, but our thrust has been that you don't have a non-renewable industry unless you use the proceeds from that to reinvigorate your renewable industries, and that's the way we're proceeding.

The mine was non-renewable. But if you look back, that was in 1968 when that was started, and they didn't have that thrust then – in fact, we were a village of 600 people back then. But it's allowed us to have the maturity and the experience so that we can look at things now in a different light. The nice thing that the mine did was it allowed us to move into the 21st century with the proper infrastructure and the right mindset so that we can work with new industries.

I was brought up in northern Ontario, in a town called Geraldton, and then Elliott Lake, which is the uranium capital of the world. I left there at eighteen years old to join the military. I became an airborne interceptor navigator on jet fighters, and I served twenty years in such places as Germany and Quebec and Ontario, BC, Manitoba – I was even out in the Maritimes for a while – so I've seen most of it. I decided to retire after twenty years service – I was a Major at that point in the long range financial planning in National Defense headquarters. So I left there, and I'd flown over this place a couple of times and sort of liked it. I had some associates look up businesses that were available on the island. I happened to choose



Port Hardy and I moved here and opened up a Work Wear World store. It became an independent operation shortly after that. I ran that for fifteen years, and then shut it down, because as the mine shut down I knew the demand was not there for that type of store, at least not on a profitable basis. While I owned the store I became involved in politics. I ran for mayor and got elected in 1993. I served three terms, so that's a total of nine years. I had a previous stint of one year as a councilor and two years as a regional director before that. I decided not to run again two years ago. At that point I started into partnership with a fellow to produce a wind farm up here, which we're doing on private land. The financing is literally within a day of being realized, and then we'll go into production, so that takes up a lot of my time.

On the offshore side, I've been involved in all of the oil and gas commissions that have sat – except the '86 commission – and I've had quite an interest in offshore oil and gas for quite some time. I think I have a very rounded view, coming from the mining side – my dad was a mining engineer – and also from the energy side of things, looking at both the renewable and the non-renewable, and from the political side of understanding how that all works, how it all meshes.

You'll find most people on the north island – we refer to them in the mining industry as “end-of-roaders” – they're quite independent people. They come looking for adventure, some of them are looking for an escape. I was fairly well matured by the time I got here – I was forty by that time, and since I've been here, I've picked up quite a heavy local perspective – you know, what's in it for communities? You've got to realize that Port Hardy was settled in 1847, so it was one of the first communities that was settled on the coast. A lot of the families are still here. So when I say I've been here twenty-five years and I'm still a newcomer, that's really what it is. I'm starting to feel like I'm almost becoming someone that they're considering as a resident.

Port Hardy's main challenge is going to be adapting responsibly to future challenges. What I mean by that is, one of the arguments I've had with people here is that you don't go chasing big outfits. You chase a whole bunch of small outfits. And you take the local outfits and mature them so that they become big outfits. Hardy's been faced with that a little bit over the last number of years with some fly-by-night schemes and some schemes not fully thought out. What we have to do, for instance, with the oil and gas is we have to approach it in a very common-sense fashion and say, What's in it for us? Not considering we are the end all and be all, but we have to really think out how we're going to do this. Port Hardy has changed from

being one of the richest postal codes to just slightly above average. People keep lusting for those golden days. This was the first place I saw tax lawyers, because the guys were making so much money they had to have tax lawyers to tell them how things were done. People never forget that. But I don't want them to figure that those days are coming back, because we don't have to have those days back. What we need is a good gradual increase in people, well-managed so we take maximum advantage of it.

I was known as a very activist mayor, and I believe the only way of getting things done is to get in at the start, figure out what's going on, so I did a fair bit of research into the oil and gas industry. I've known all the premiers on a personal basis and I've made my views very clear to them that we were going to be part of it, but we were going to be part of it in a way that they might not like. I figured that, seeing as I opened my mouth a couple of times, I better get involved, so I have. I phoned Norman Dale and told him I was going to be on the Community Guidance Group.

I didn't have a lot of optimism that the UNBC program would solve a lot of problems, and I didn't think they would come out with a lot of definitive solutions. Given the politics of the day – and you have to understand how politics works – things were stacked against them. The UNBC grant was given as an election campaign goodie, which I was very surprised to see Campbell carry through, but he did it. But I knew that if I wasn't involved and a few other people weren't involved, the thing could get sidetracked and off on the wrong tangent. So the way I looked at it was that I had to be there to try and get the stability, as I saw it, on there, and ensure that the outcome was at least neutral, or optimistically positive for the development of oil and gas on the coast. I knew what everyone's position was, but I also knew a lot of the players, and I knew that you don't delude yourself with paper. You look at where are the goals of the various individuals and you decide what they might try and do or how they might try and flavour this. While everyone talks about being neutral, no one is neutral in the end. They might look neutral on the surface, but in the real world it doesn't happen.

My expectations didn't change. Every night when I get done the day, I normally sit back and have a scotch, and the reason I do that is to sit back and review the day, the decisions I've made, and how I've made them – sort of a self-critique – and I look at them and say, Could you have done better, should you have done different? Quite often I'll have to change my opinion based on what happened during the day. I found that, with this particular entity, my opinion didn't change. But the nice part of it is that I got to meet a lot of people, and I think I changed their perspective a bit. I'll use one example. When we first met in the airport on the way to the East Coast study tour I was one of the last ones to speak. I heard one person that was sort of “for” and one other that was “for” oil and gas and everyone else was against. So I came out with a very positive approach, that this is what we have to do.

You've got to understand when this whole process started. When all those research projects were kicked off, they were very pertinent at the time. As time moved on and we had Priddle hearings and scientific panels ad nauseum, some of the things became less relevant. However, all of the work that was done – and some of it seemed fairly mundane – but it's things that have to be done. We've been going through that in the last few weeks of arguing about baseline studies and this sort of thing. The UNBC program triggered a lot of the work on that. So the nice thing is that there was about two years, or a year and a bit, that weren't a void, that things were being done, so that's useful. There was a lot of discussion and it was a neat avenue for the pros and cons to come together officially/unofficially.

Before that started, there was very little dialogue between the north coast and the central coast and the north island. They were all separate entities. All had their own economic viability, and then it all turned to shit. The nice thing about these dialogues is they allowed people to talk – the ordinary people. I had all

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I'VE KNOWN ALL THE PREMIERS ON A PERSONAL BASIS AND I'VE MADE MY VIEWS VERY CLEAR TO THEM THAT WE WERE GOING TO BE PART OF IT, BUT WE WERE GOING TO BE PART OF IT IN A WAY THAT THEY MIGHT NOT LIKE. I FIGURED THAT, SEEING AS I OPENED MY MOUTH A COUPLE OF TIMES, I BETTER GET INVOLVED, SO I HAVE.

sorts of substitute avenues. I could talk to the mayors, talk to organizations, so I could get my perspective heard fairly well. But for the coast itself, for normal people, they didn't have that ability to communicate. These things have really solidified that type of dialogue. And now you can't shut it off. So it's now inevitable that this type of discussion takes place. It's away from the political structure, and it's away from the industry structure. It's people, and that's a strong thing.

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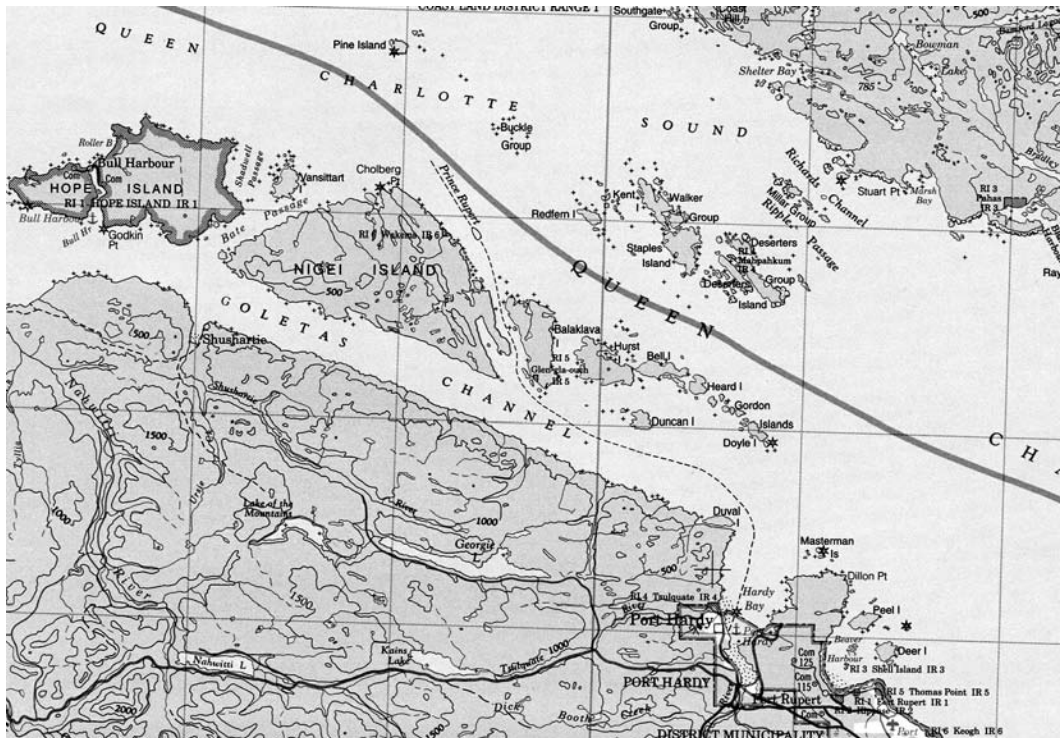
I THINK OIL AND GAS WILL HAVE A VERY POSITIVE IMPACT HERE. THIS IS GOING TO BE ONE OF THE FEW TIMES WHEN PORT HARDY IS ACTUALLY GOING TO BE READY FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS AND DO IT RIGHT.

Here on the coast, there's a great deal of skepticism of the mainland and the down-island universities, a feeling that they might be missing the point. I'd encouraged UNBC to get more involved in coastal activities, because it's natural. I was pleased with the effort that UNBC put into it. I've worked with universities before, and I know that academics have got limitations. There's no use arguing against it, because it's happened for thousands of years, and it won't change. But they had a desire, and they put the effort into establishing this and to making sure it worked. Some of the processes weren't necessarily the most productive. However, that's irrelevant when you consider it's the academia doing it. The work got started, it got done, and UNBC became much more attached to the coast. I do a lot of things with UBC and some with UVic and Simon Fraser, and I have a great deal of skepticism with what their motives are. I'd much sooner have someone like UNBC doing these types of things. I think it's helped them a lot on the coast.

Moving forward, I think oil and gas will have a very positive impact here. This is going to be one of the few times when Port Hardy is actually going to be ready for something like this and do it right. We have a number of reservations on how it's done. We're going to be shooting for a service type of industry, supply, crew transportation – that's all we want. We don't want the boat repairs, we don't want the heavy industry type of thing that's attached to it. We would be willing to look at a gas plant. That's where the mine site comes in, it looms very large in that type of thing. But Hardy would be very satisfied topping out at about 6500 to 7000 people, which is quite comfortable. That allows us to have our living standards. That's why with Ocean Industries BC and POEA we got all Vancouver Island thinking that way. We're saying that, look, if it comes to Vancouver Island, Hardy will be one of the supply bases in all likelihood. However, Nanaimo and Victoria have got excellent shipyards. That should be done there. Why shouldn't the headquarters be in Nanaimo or Victoria, not Vancouver? So we've got everyone thinking on that track of let's all take a piece of it. It works out very nicely, it doesn't all have to be in the same place. Industry agrees with that. There will not be something like a major production base. You might find, if we have an FPSO [floating production, storage and offshore loading vessel] or something that Vancouver or Nanaimo or Victoria could bid on the outfitting of it. So it would be natural that we approached it in that fashion. It's good economics for the company, it's good economics for us. I think we would see in the order of probably 400 or 500 jobs. But you have to remember that there's 2.5 people for every job, so that's where we get our 7000 people. I could see that. I could see our airport beefed up considerably. I would see a major port structure in line with provisioning and that. We have the facilities that can handle the first two to three years, the seismic work and that. We already have them in place, so there's no problem with the boats operating out of here. And after that it's basically a supply port and a lay down area.

I talk mainly gas because the odds are we're going to get gas here. We prefer gas, it's cleaner, it's easier, there's not as many jobs, but they're nice jobs. And what gas will do is that we'll have about 50 years of activity from a field. What I see is we use the profits from the oil and gas – from the non-renewable industry – and we get our forests back in shape, we get our oceans back in shape, and we also go the one step further, which the Liberals don't agree with me on, but we have to invest, or help communities, or help businesses invest in modernizing plants. They're repayable investments, but you have to put the money up front to get these things in place so that your value-added production starts happening up here and not

down there, and then the coast is self-sufficient. You have to have the money to do that. The governments are quite straight forward when you get into the talk about where the money is. There's no money for that. And the only way you're going to get money for that is by using a non-renewable resource. But before you dedicate that non-renewable resource, you've got to have guarantees that the profits, or a portion of it – and in the big picture it's a small portion – a portion of that has to be dedicated to the renewal. That's what Norway did. They understood that the coastal communities were in decline. So when they got oil, they



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WHAT I SEE IS WE USE THE PROFITS FROM THE OIL AND GAS – FROM THE NON-RENEWABLE INDUSTRY – AND WE GET OUR FORESTS BACK IN SHAPE, WE GET OUR OCEANS BACK IN SHAPE, AND WE ALSO GO THE ONE STEP FURTHER.

said, okay, we're going to revitalize the coast. The main thing to make a coast work is you have to have infrastructure: you have to have ports, airports, roads, water, sewer in the towns, and they have to be paid for. Then the town becomes viable. And then the next thing you need to look at is you've got to look at your natural renewable resources that are around your town and figure out how those resources can be used to make that town work. It's pretty easy to do, but you just have to take a different approach to it and you have to dedicate a portion of that money.

The offshore in BC is not new. We already did exactly the same thing that we're proposing to do – we started in 1963 through to 1968. We shot the seismic, we drilled the holes, and there has been absolutely no effect that anyone has been able to tell me or record on adverse effects from that. The other thing that we have to look at is that BC is in the 21st century and energy is an item that we cannot do without. An industrial exporting state needs energy. We absolutely have to have secure energy, and this is one of the best ways of securing that. This is a chance for us to exchange a non-renewable source of energy for a future improvement in the renewable fields. Not necessarily the energy fields, but we can use this money also to activate wind power and tide power and this sort of thing, which takes initial government money to get it kicked off. We all talk about industry doing things, but you need that kickoff, and it's small, it's not a lot of money. People talk about two or three billion being a lot of money, but we're talking 110 billion worth of oil and gas out there. That's a small portion, and it get things kicked off. A province has to be seen as wanting to move ahead, exploring the options, finding out what's out there, and then either utilizing it or not utilizing it, but then moving ahead, not stagnating on a piece of information you don't know. So I'm very optimistic. It's a good thing. It will work.



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# BILL SHEPHARD

PORT MCNEILL

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M Y NAME IS BILL SHEPHARD, I'M THE CHAIRMAN OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT of Mount Waddington, which encompasses approximately the northerly third of Vancouver Island and the mainland area to the divide across from us. Our community is primarily a natural resource community. The people of Port McNeill put two hundred and fifty large truckloads of wood in the water every day, and the north island sends twenty truckloads of farmed salmon down island virtually every working day of the week. We're one of the more important forestry areas in Canada, and fifty percent of the farmed salmon in Canada is produced in the Regional District of Mount Waddington. Traditionally there has been mining and forestry in the north island, and there was a fishing industry for some time. But the difficulties of the fisheries seem to be prevalent everywhere, and fisheries has been under a lot of pressure in the last decade, certainly in the last six or seven years in the north island.

THE PEOPLE OF PORT MCNEILL PUT TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY LARGE TRUCKLOADS OF WOOD IN THE WATER EVERY DAY, AND THE NORTH ISLAND SENDS TWENTY TRUCKLOADS OF FARMED SALMON DOWN ISLAND VIRTUALLY EVERY WORKING DAY OF THE WEEK.

As Chairman of the Regional District, I have basically moved across the table from my role as planning director and administrator of the Regional District for 20 years. I was the planning director of the Peace River-Liard Regional District, and previous to that I was a planner with the Peace River Regional Planning Commission in Grand Prairie, Alberta. I'm familiar with agriculture, with the oil and gas industry and with forestry. My background has been in rural regional districts, primarily ones that are resource-based and that have active and dynamic natural resource industries.

I was chosen to come onto the Community Guidance Group by Norman Dale. Norman did some work here some time ago when we were looking at some marine aquaculture related projects in the north island. I was chosen because of my background, presumably – and I think I know the North Island reasonably well, particularly the forestry and industrial part of the north island. Some people in environmental groups, or people that are more oriented toward the preservation of things, might not identify as much with me. I was involved as planning director here when the salmon farming industry came into the north island about 20 years ago. We assisted many of the neophyte companies that were coming in to get salmon farm leases and we assisted by putting on a number of conferences. It's turned out to be an industry that employs 500 people today, so it's worked out well for us. At least, from my point of view, it's worked out well. Some other people might not think so.

The coast, particularly the north island, sees itself as a fairly remote area. When I moved here from Dawson Creek, I was somewhat puzzled when people from Port McNeill thought they lived way up north. It's not up north. It's on Vancouver Island. It's a three-hour drive from Nanaimo if you put the hammer down, and Vancouver's just over the horizon. Nevertheless, the coast has its own sort of cultural values. There's a lot

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INDUSTRY DOESN'T NECESSARILY MEAN JUST DRILLING FOR OIL AND WORKING ON AN OIL RIG. IT COULD INVOLVE A LOT OF THINGS – ANYTHING FROM MONITORING REGULATIONS TO PROVIDING CONTRACT SERVICES TO DEALING IN EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS OR WHATEVER. THERE'LL BE LOTS OF JOBS IN THE INDUSTRY.

of First Nations history on the north island and on the coast, as opposed to the Peace River country or the generally settled part of BC and Alberta. When you go north in Alberta or BC there are some First Nation issues, but generally speaking First Nation issues are predominant on the coast. There's a lot of tradition in logging, in fishing, and there's a lot of people that feel they're losing something, a way of life that existed back as far as the 20s in logging and fishing when things were wide open and you could fish six days a week – and when you got finished fishing there were always jobs logging. That's not the case anymore. Our economy is tied into the larger economy and we're not as wide open as it was then.

A great many people up here would like to go back to the way it was in the 50s or 60s. But of course that's always impossible, be it agriculture, be it forestry, be it commercial fishing or anything else. The economy moves ahead globally and the local economy has to keep in step or become a backwater. And there are lots of backwaters on the coast. You look at Ocean Falls, and you look at the entire central coast, which was a fairly dynamic area in the 30s, 40s, even 50s, but now it's a depopulated backwater to some extent which is having difficulties supplying services in places like Bella Bella, Bella Coola, Ocean Falls and the rest of it. It's a different mindset on the coast here.

The offshore oil and gas industry will put more jobs into the area. And I believe, from what I understand, there will be a program to get qualified local people training to work in the industry. And the industry doesn't necessarily mean just drilling for oil and working on an oil rig. It could involve a lot of things – anything from monitoring regulations to providing contract services to dealing in equipment and materials or whatever. There'll be lots of jobs in the industry. I'm looking forward, from my seat as the Chairman of the Regional District, to additional tax assessment if oil and gas is developed. I presume there'll be some kind of a tax base attached to it, perhaps on the well sites themselves, possibly on the pipelines, and certainly on gas plants, pumping stations and other industrial installations.

I think of Guysborough County in Nova Scotia, the tax base of the gas plant certainly helped Guysborough, and the school board there, and everyone else. They'd done some improvements on the basis of that extra income. All we, as local government, can deal with is providing a site for a gas plant or whatever is involved. I would insist that our local communities be served with natural gas service. I found that a little odd in the Maritimes that they hadn't even hooked up to gas. Nobody even had gas stoves or gas water heaters or gas furnaces in their houses, and they didn't perceive that as an issue. They traditionally had electric stoves and water heaters and they burned wood mostly. I don't know what they thought happened to the gas when it got to Boston, but they were supremely indifferent to hooking up to it.



Through the NCIRP process I certainly found out a lot more about our neighbours on the coast, particularly in Prince Rupert and on the Charlottes. There wasn't as much involvement from the Central Coast as there might have been, but judging by the fact that many of those communities are under a great deal of pressure, and some of them have almost disappeared, the representation from the Central Coast was understandable. The other thing that I found interesting was that none of the North Island First Nations who are adjacent to the proposed Queen Charlotte Basin were included in the process, whereas most of the First Nations from this area were remote from the Queen Charlotte Basin. The Community Guidance Group helped particularly to understand where people in the Charlottes and the central coast are coming from. No matter what differences of opinion you have, I think there's a fair amount of respect for a variety of opinions. There's a bit of whining about the environmental bias of the group, but I don't see that as a problem, quite frankly.

The NCIRP process has established the fact that UNBC is willing to go out to the coast and work with the communities collectively. The big three down south don't do that. Generally, you don't meet that many people from UBC, SFU or UVic. I think UNBC has done a very objective job of this, and I would hope that UNBC would have a role in the offshore oil process as an academic institution doing some of the research. Of course, UNBC is just over the hill from Fort St. John. Nobody on the coast here really understands what the oil patch is all about. I think it would be easier for UNBC to develop a relationship with NAIT, SAIT, University of Calgary and University of Alberta in Edmonton. Some of the community colleges have got some good technical courses up there as well, and I think UNBC could act as a broker, or a catalyst to that process. Certainly I've been touting UNBC as one that should have a key role in some of the academic backup to this. Others are touting UVic and their oceans program down there. I've never met anyone from their oceans program, and I live in Port McNeill. Ostensibly they're four hours down the road, and I've never had one of them walk into my office, so why would I be interested? If they don't come up here, that means they're not going to do any work up here.

I lived fifteen years in the Peace River country, so I'm intimately familiar with all the aspects of drilling. Half the people in the oil patch have worked in the Gulf, they've worked in Africa, they've worked in Nigeria and Indonesia. I walked into the gas plant in Guysborough, and the manager was from Cochrane, Alberta and the assistant manager was from Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. No surprises there. None at all. They are qualified, capable people who are really on the ball, really production oriented. Oil patch people are usually really well-focused, capable and energetic. I came back from the Maritime trip a little more positive about the east coast. I hadn't been that impressed up to that time. I thought that there was a fair amount of boondoggle in the Newfoundland Hibernia project. There was quite a bit of controversy about it, but there's controversy about any new thing – when you're producing 200,000 barrels a day and making it work, although you might have been able to do it a little cheaper – but given the circumstances, the Grand Banks and the icebergs and all of the problems, they seem to have come out of it alright. It was quite a major project.

Sable Island was a smaller project. And they appear to have got it together and made it work, made it pay for itself. The initial drilling on Sable Island was sort of all over the map. Nobody really got their shit together and put anything together there, I think probably because there was no oil and gas wasn't worth very much. I can see why they just flared the gas in the 60s and 70s. I think it was worth 80 cents a thousand cubic feet in those days, so naturally Sable was not viable. But now, with gas at nine bucks, and adjacent to the east coast, obviously now they've pulled everything together and it's working for them. There never was a lot of gas developed in Pennsylvania or Ohio to the point that it served a place like New York or Philadelphia or Boston. So the field at Sable was probably held back by that, by markets predominantly.

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I WALKED INTO THE GAS PLANT IN GUYSBOROUGH, AND THE MANAGER WAS FROM COCHRANE, ALBERTA AND THE ASSISTANT MANAGER WAS FROM ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE, ALBERTA. NO SURPRISES THERE. NONE AT ALL.

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THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE BASIN COULD PUT 250,000 BARRELS A DAY INTO THE MARKET. IT COULD BE A STRATEGIC ADDITION TO BC'S ENERGY PACKAGE TEN YEARS FROM NOW.



This is not a big play. Today in the world, 85 million barrels will be raised and used, 85 million barrels. Every day of the week, that's what's used. China and India are coming on board. Conventional wisdom says – although there's differences of opinion – that oil production, if it hasn't peaked this year, will peak by 2010. The price of oil touched a little over fifty bucks this year, and it doesn't show too many signs of going below forty. It may go down to thirty-five, I don't know. The Queen Charlotte Basin could put, optimistically, 250,000 barrels a day into the market, which is what Hibernia is. It could be a strategic addition to BC's energy package ten years from now. Otherwise, if you want to go out and shop for \$70 or \$80 oil, be my guest. Don't forget, if you put gasoline up to the price of bottled water, you'd triple the price of it, so it's got a little bit of price flexibility.

There's going to be a hell of a lot of money, and it's going to cost a hell of a lot more fifteen to twenty years from now. The opportunity to have a gas plant here and a gas pipeline down to Campbell River where the gas line comes up the island – I see that as potentially putting another service into the household. So gas furnaces, gas hot water heaters, gas stoves in every home in Port McNeill and Port Hardy. Alert Bay may not see that, and Sointula definitely doesn't. Thirty percent of the community that owns houses in Sointula probably live in Washington, Oregon or California. The fishing industry over there is under a great deal of stress. And they're not about to have many new ideas either.

My background, to some extent, is in the meat packing business in Alberta. I was never so amazed as to see a seine boat landing its catch when I moved to the coast. They took a product that I could sell for \$3 a pound in Edmonton and converted it to 25 cents a pound. They treat it like shit, leave it in the hold for three or four days packed in ice, and unload it industrially on the dock. It's barely fit for cat food by the time they get finished with it. That's why there's never any wild fish that go into a farmed salmon plant. They wouldn't tolerate it. It's not up to their standards, and never will be as long as these people are catching it. There's some of the freezer trollers and people that are looking at the high-end market, but the industrial fishing industry just haven't got a clue and aren't about to change their minds in any way at all.

The quality of farmed salmon is far better. It's stunned and bled instead of asphyxiating in a fish hold, it's handled so there's no bruises on it, it's gutted before it goes into rigor, it's tempered in ice, the temperature's brought down to zero very, very quickly so there's no deterioration of it – the shelf life on it would be three times what it would be on traditional wild caught fish – and a lot of it goes out skinless and boneless. The main thing that people that don't eat fish are concerned about is bones. If you can bone fish and it's red in colour, you can compete against t-bone steaks, chicken, pork chops at the meat counter. If you've got some goddamn thing that's been dragged in by the cat and frozen in a cellophane bag and looks like a door stop, you don't even get in the meat counter at Safeway, and that's where a product sells. You try to explain that to a fisherman sometime and see their eyes glaze over. They're not interested. The wild fleet absolutely refuses to deal with quality and appearance and the market.

Last Saturday, I had lunch at a food fair in the Market Mall in Calgary. There was a fish and chips store, and I saw salmon fish and chips. There were two pink fillets that were about three and a half or four ounces, very well-prepared, boneless. The kid in the back, who looked like he was probably getting \$10 an hour, battered them, fried them, the same way he would the hake fillets he was using for the fish and chips, and they came out with a package of tartar sauce and some chips for six bucks. So somebody, at least, is finding out what to do with 25-cent pink salmon. I could take those pinks, bone them out, and sell them for \$2 or \$3 a pound, and somebody is obviously doing that, but I suspect it's not a fisherman.

What people have to realize is that we're a natural resource community producing a wide variety of natural products for world markets. We have the only products that go into the export market. If you had to depend on the manufacturing industry in suburban Toronto and Ottawa for your export industry, we'd have a major imbalance of trade. The oil and gas, the lumber, and the rest of the products that we produce here are highly valuable products that enter international markets, that are very, very important to the provincial and Canadian economy. Oil and gas is just another case in point. It produces a product that our whole society and culture depends on. It's just such an important part of our culture and our economy, as is lumber, as are seafood products, as are mining products. It's the nature of the rural natural resource economy. It's not like living in Toronto or Montreal or Vancouver. It's a different economy, and it's a different world.

We have to look out for the services that we need in our communities. Increasingly, at both the federal and the provincial level, small communities like Port McNeill are being left on the sidelines. They say, "You can live in Port McNeill or Wainwright, Alberta or Weyburn, Saskatchewan if you choose, but we're not going to lift a finger to help you. We're going to close your courthouse, we're going to put your schools under pressure and we're going to close your hospital, because these hospitals and schools are too small for economies of scale. So you better put your kids on a school bus and hope the ambulance starts, because we're not going to support you." That's both federal and provincial, and it's not just in BC. This is Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and even in Quebec and Ontario. We've got to cut out enough of the pie to ensure that we maintain our services, because nobody in Victoria or Ottawa is going to do that for us. You can't be bitter or angry or lobby. We don't have the political numbers to lobby effectively. They'll build subways to Richmond, or they'll take a truckload of money to Bombardier, but there's nothing coming this way except tokenism and window dressing. So we'll have to try to deal as well as we can with the Weyerhaeusers, the Western Forest Products, the Canfors, the Stolt Sea Farms, and maybe Shell and California Standard who have the oil leases out there.

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# MARJORIE GREENSIDES

SOINTULA

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THE NAME OF MY COMMUNITY IS SOINTULA AND IT'S LOCATED ON MALCOLM ISLAND off the northeastern tip of Vancouver Island. It's rural, it's remote, it's isolated, it's proud. You can't talk about Malcolm Island without talking about *sisu*, which is an old Finn word that, as soon as I heard it, I understood this community a lot better. It doesn't translate very well into English, but it's this Finnish quality of resilience and the desire to just keep going. It's stubbornness, it's the fortitude to break through whatever you need to carry on. That's one of the founding values that people brought here, and I think that resonates here today with people's lack of desire for any kind of government control, regulations, bylaws – we can do it, we've always done it, we can always do it.

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It's definitely a struggling community, and it's definitely a community going through a huge demographic shift. Traditionally, this community was made up of predominantly the original settlers and their descendants, so you've got sixth generation Sointulians that exist – they're about two or three years old right now. Then you had a big movement in the late 60s and early 70s, the whole draft dodger, back to the land movement. So that was sort of the second major wave into this community. And now what's happening is the population is getting older. You'll find a fair chunk of people in their late-twenties or early-thirties with children that have found a way to survive here – they were either fishermen that had managed to save enough money to buy their boats and licenses during the buyback program and have continue to fish, or loggers. So those are the young families. And pretty much everyone in that age group has children. You don't find very many single, non-children, mid-thirties people here. But between high school graduation and the age of twenty-five there's no one. They all leave. Which isn't new. They've always left. The difference is they don't come home anymore, because there's nothing to come home to. They stay in the city.

What's been happening is you're getting more and more retirees, young retirees, those fifty-plus, as well as American's buying vacation property. And this has had repercussions all over the place in the rental market. Traditionally, a family would own multiple homes on this island. You only need one to live in, and you rent out the rest, maybe to a couple of your kids, and to others. So there was always a lot of rental homes here. I've lived in probably ten houses on this island. Getting a rental home now is painful. And rents are skyrocketing. What used to be a \$400 house is now going for \$700 or \$750. The people that live here don't have that kind of income. The people that manage to live here manage to just survive for the most part.

But I love this community. I love that stubbornness and fortitude and resilience. The very first time I came here, I literally walked off the ferry and let out a full body sigh. I came here in April of 1990. I was living in



the West End, I was living on Davie Street in Vancouver and I'd been laid off from the Ministry of the Environment, so my job was gone. I decided to look for work out of town, something that preferably provided me with room and board. I got a job on Quadra Island and applied for one here, but never heard back from the people on Malcolm Island, so I moved to Quadra Island. But they hunted me down on Quadra and offered me a job as a manager's assistant at the hotel on Malcolm, because the hotel was still running then, doing very well because there was still a huge fishing industry here.

So I came to do that and save money to go to Southeast Asia. I lived here for about six months, worked really hard, saved all my money, played really hard, because people here play really hard in the summer time, and went to get my physical and my shots to go traveling and found out I was thirteen weeks pregnant. So I opted not to go to Southeast Asia and decided this would be a great place to raise my kid. So I did that. I stayed here until she was four. Then I moved to Vancouver for a year, and then Victoria for five years to get my degree. I spent my summers here and came up at least three times a year if not more. It was always home, from the second I walked off the ferry it was home.

My degree is in environmental studies and sociology, with a strong stint in political science. My intent was never to become a community developer, but I've always been highly intrigued by social groups and how they interact, and how decisions are made and society's operate as a result of individuals coming together as groups. I deliberately remove the word 'economic' from that traditional title of community economic development for the simple reason that, although jobs are intrinsic to community, because you can't have people if they don't have money to live on, the health of a community is so much greater than just its economics. If people are passionate and committed and love somewhere enough, they'll find the economic way to make it work. But they have to have that passion, and they have to be supported, and they have to be healthy. So that's where I want to put my energy, making sure my community is supported, that it has skills, that it has access to information and opportunities to make its economic survival. If you just create jobs, it doesn't necessarily build a community. Look at all the resource-based communities that have formed over the years. They formed because of jobs. What happens when the jobs are gone? The community's gone. I'm not saying that it's good or bad, but I believe that, for a healthy community, jobs are just one piece of a much bigger puzzle.

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ALTHOUGH JOBS ARE INTRINSIC TO COMMUNITY, THE HEALTH OF A COMMUNITY IS SO MUCH GREATER THAN JUST ITS ECONOMICS. LOOK AT ALL THE RESOURCE-BASED COMMUNITIES THAT HAVE FORMED OVER THE YEARS. THEY FORMED BECAUSE OF JOBS. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE JOBS ARE GONE? THE COMMUNITY'S GONE.

This community definitely appealed to my independent, somewhat eclectic nature. It allowed me the comfort to explore that without fear of ostracism, which is interesting because you'd think that would be a more comfortable thing to do in the city where you're anonymous. But what it did was it gave me a comfortable outlet to explore some of my ideals and value systems that I couldn't have gotten in a city. The other thing it did was it really reconfirmed to me how important and vital rural and remote communities are to society in general. They actually do form a role. You know, when you're in Vancouver you can forget there's a whole other province out there doing stuff and that it actually plays into your day to day life even though it's so far removed that you can't even see it.

Globalization has a huge impact on the north island region even though we think we're removed from it sometimes. Take Sointula, for example: the number of international visitors went through the roof last year compared to the year before. Sointula's been getting a lot of publicity. We had a French film crew here making a documentary for France, we've had Finnish film crews here doing documentaries. It has a really unique history. So on that scale, it opens you up, so you get this influx of the global world. Plus you have to look at the global markets and how that affects resources. Resources are totally dependent on what the global market's doing. So when you have a resource-based rural community like this one, or like most of them, their health is contingent on what some guy on Wall Street is deciding to sell his futures at today. And it's hard to look at that, and it's hard to make that tangible, because it is so far removed, but I don't think it can be forgotten when you're trying to deal with the survival of a rural community.

It'll be interesting to see what this community is in five years. Someone – an old-timer, multi-generational resident – we were chit-chatting one day in late September, and he looked at me and he said, "You know, with all these property sales and all these goddamn tourists, it's going to be December before we can figure out who actually freaking lives here!" And he's right.

On a more tangible, day to day level, I believe the North Island is in a leadership crisis, and I believe that's a huge problem for us. I have tremendous respect for the leadership we have and the time they've put in and their commitment to these communities. But they truly are locked in a development mentality that just isn't viable anymore. And that's why they're working so hard for oil and gas. It's a new industry, but it's comfortable. It's a big multinational giant coming in to extract a resource – gee, where have we seen that before? Every industry that's ever existed on this coast, that's where. It's comfortable. They know how to operate within that structure. But you start trying to talk about creating a research base to look at whale behaviour as an employment opportunity, you meet with, "What do you mean?" Well, what I mean is you set up camp and you bring in these research students and you charge them stupid money to be here and you provide jobs for guides and you provide services and you provide supplies. Plus, it's what we have.

It's our wealth. Our ocean and our forests and everything within that is what sets us apart from Vancouver. That's where our wealth comes from. It doesn't come from office buildings and that kind of stuff. It comes from the natural environment. So, yeah, there's a leadership crisis. And unfortunately, given the lack of jobs here, we're losing our youth, so there isn't new leadership coming up behind it to take that place.

Another fundamental stumbling block is that, if you're trying to change the economy of the community and diversify it, and you're getting into things like tourism or information technology or any number of other things, the population doesn't have the skill base. I don't mean intelligence and skills and being able





to perform tasks, I mean they don't have the lifestyle culture conducive to a lot of those new industries. A lot of people around here are used to working really, really hard for four months of the year, and when they're out on the water they go days without sleeping, and they're used to making, say, even \$50,000 a year in a bad year, but it's spaced in this really tight, hard-working time frame. And then the rest of the year, you go out and get wood and you go hunting and you do all these other things. You go out and gather to get you through the winter. Try to convince that guy that he's now got to chain himself nine-to-five, Monday to Friday, to something to still make that \$50,000, plus he's got to give up his hunting time and his fishing time and his going to get wood time – it's just not the culture. So that is a huge stumbling block, and I don't know how you deal with that.

Even then, I think the employment impacts of oil and gas will be minimal. When we were on the east coast, a guy in St. John's put it beautifully. He said, "All it did for us is the guys who were driving Beemers [BMWs] before are now driving two really nice Beemers." So I don't think there's going to be a lot of job creation at all. I believe there will be some economic spinoffs. How could there not be? But I think in terms of selling that as bringing jobs as a way to save rural communities, I don't believe that's true at all. I truly believe that for any rural community to survive, its solutions have to come from itself, not from the outside, because it's the people who have to live it on a day by day basis. So it's not going to bring jobs. It's not going to provide any kind of increase in social benefits. Just because we have oil and gas doesn't mean all of a sudden we're going to have more police, more ambulances, more schools. And I think the jobs and revenue that will be generated from this industry are all going to funnel through the big urban centres, just like they do on the east coast. The few economic benefits that have been realized on the east coast went to St. John's and Halifax.



IF YOU TOOK THAT SAME AMOUNT OF MONEY, PUT IT SOMEWHERE ELSE, ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SAY, THEN NOT ONLY ARE THE NUMBER OF JOBS CREATED THAT MUCH GREATER, BUT THEY HAVE A POTENTIAL TO BE MUCH MORE LOCALLY-ORIENTED.

If you do a cost-benefit analysis – for the amount of capital investment that has to go into producing that industry – if you took that same amount of money, put it somewhere else, alternative energy say, then not only are the number of jobs created that much greater, but they have a potential to be much more locally-oriented, because you're not having to ship for processing and refining. Wind – you produce it here. It goes through the line, you hook up to Hydro, and away you go. Tidal power – same thing. It's not the same level of processing involved, so the jobs are actually here.

Coming into this process, given my general value system and political leanings, oil and gas was not an industry I was willing to necessarily embrace. But I definitely didn't know enough about it to be a hardline, go tie myself to an oil well kind of protester. My instinct was that this probably wasn't the greatest, but I really didn't know enough to make an informed decision. The east coast trip confirmed for me one hundred percent that oil and gas was just not what we should be doing on this coast, just not where we should be putting our time and energy. There were a number of little things along the way. I remember in Guysborough County they had this transfer station. It provided a few jobs. But for them it wasn't about the jobs. It didn't provide enough jobs that it made a huge difference. It's a small community. But what they were really stoked about was the taxes they would get from all of this. So that sounded really cool. You've got this little transfer station and all of a sudden you're getting millions more in tax dollars per year. But through the course of the presentation we found out that, although they were getting taxes, they were holding something like sixty percent of it in reserve and not touching it, because they were in court proceedings with ExxonMobil over tax assessment rates. Exxon thought they were way too high. So not only were they not getting a whole lot of jobs, but now they're in a legal battle with ExxonMobil over their tax dollars. And you can't just get Frank from down the street to be your lawyer. You're going up against ExxonMobil. You need a law team behind you. So what money they are generating, what they are touching is going for things like lawyers to fight ExxonMobil. And they knew that they were going to lose, and they were just hoping they weren't going to lose as much as they thought they were going to lose, which is why they were holding all this in reserve, because if they lost, they had to pay it all back to ExxonMobil.

So I'm looking at things like this: they got a new gym. But what happens when the oil's all gone? How are you going to pay to maintain your gym? I just thought this was insane. Where's the balance here? You've got elected officials and administrative staff stressed to the nines because they're trying to deal with these legal issues for an amount of money that, really, in the end – had they taken that same time and energy that they're putting into this legal battle and put it into economic diversification and finding that niche, that thing that makes their community unlike any other community and selling the crap out of it – instead you've got this stressed staff, you've got stressed officials, and as a result that trickles down into the rest of the community, so now you have an entire stressed community. How is this healthy? How is this helping this community? Not to mention you now have a transfer station which has the potential for a lot more accidents and stuff like that. So now we've got pressure on the health care system and now we've got pressure on the ambulance system. And, because there aren't as many jobs as we thought, Frank's now drinking way more, so now we have way more domestic violence disputes, so that stress just keeps branching itself out and branching itself out and branching itself out. So there's a really concrete example of things that happened back there that made me really stop and wonder why would we want to do this?

Then you get into things like the environment, and talking about oil spill cleanup. And this gets into a fundamental problem with our entire social structure. You've got these private industries that are responsible for oil spill cleanup. They're not regulated by anybody, but they're contracted to do oil spill cleanup. So, all of a sudden, what should be a negative economic return – because you're destroying equipment, all of

these things, and then we get the environmental mess in and of itself – it's now an economic boost because this private company's just made millions of dollars because they just had to go clean up 170 million litres.

And then, for me, it was talking to the average people. I probably spoke to over a hundred people on the street. I would deliberately seek out groups. Most of the youth who did go to school to learn about oil and gas work in Africa or Alberta, none of them work on the east coast. And then looking at things like the Atlantic Accord, and how screwed the provinces were by that, and how screwed the fishermen were as a result of oil and gas. There were just too many things for me that, every time something came up, I'd just think to myself, Why would we put our time and energy into that when we could put it somewhere else that fits us better as a community?

Each of the North Island communities is unique and individualistic. Port Hardy was all about mining. Port Alice was all about the mill. Port McNeill was all about forestry. Sointula and Alert Bay were always about fishing. And you would think there would be natural camaraderie there. But one of the stumbling blocks to that camaraderie and that partnership is the ferry system. I would spend way more time in the Bay if it didn't mean three hours out of my day to get there and back. And value-wise it makes sense. Fish farming is a perfect example. You would be hard-pressed to find anyone pro-fish farm on either Malcolm Island or Alert Bay, really hard-pressed. Yet in Port McNeill and Port Hardy, it's the opposite. You'd be hard-pressed to find anybody who's anti-fish farm. But we all live in the same region, so there's real division.

One of the things I've noticed over the years – and I don't want to go so far as being conspiracy-like and say there's an underlying agenda at the province and the federal level to destroy rural communities – but the approach they're taking to service delivery is very much attacking rural and remote communities and making it difficult to survive. For example, in the last month alone I've helped twelve people fill out EI forms, because they can't get hard copy EI forms anymore. The closest government agent for them to do that work is in Campbell River. And so the government's forcing everyone to do EI online. But, when you live in a city, you'd be able to go into an EI office. So if you didn't have a computer, or if you were illiterate, or if you were computer illiterate, not a problem, because you go into the office and they help you out. There's computer terminals right there, there's support staff. When you live in a place like this, there is no support system other than a 1-800 number. It's not adequate. So I think that is also another stumbling block. This movement in service delivery is impeding rural communities' ability to access services so they do stay healthy and sustainable.

I got involved in the NCIRP process because it intrigued me, partially because it was an area that I had been dabbling in. I had been working with UBC the previous year on a collaboration project. And I was doing some collaborative work with the University of Victoria at the time I started NCIRP, taking really alternative approaches to research, instead of practicing the parachute drop method that universities are really good at: come in, extract the knowledge, take away, you never hear from them. Both of those projects were a real reversal of that. What does the community want to know about itself? How can we assist the community in knowing that? When we signed the contract with UVic, we're actually joint owners of the information. UVic does not have exclusive rights to the information; it's jointly owned by the community. So it was this new thing that I'd been playing with already, and I was really intrigued with having the opportunity to try it again.





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EVERYBODY WAS  
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EVERYBODY FROM  
THE HARDLINE PRO  
TO THE HARDLINE NO  
AND EVERYONE IN  
BETWEEN.

That said, I don't think the UNBC project fulfilled its mission as well as it could have. I put multiple responsibilities on that from both the participants and the university. I think the university could have done a lot more outreach a lot earlier. I don't think this project got nearly the press that it should have. I was absolutely astonished to find out, when we were on the east coast, that nobody knew we were doing that trip. Twenty-two people from BC going to the east coast to meet with industry, environmental groups and government at a time when the province is pushing to have the oil and gas moratorium lifted is a pretty big news story. To me, that should have been talked about on the CBC every day for a good couple of weeks. So I think that was a real weak point in the program, and I think, had that been a lot stronger, there would have been a lot more opportunity for true community participation. And I think it was the group's responsibility to push for that more as well.

I think this could have had a lot more impact, and not just around oil and gas. The one thing that we haven't gotten into is that, for all that I learned about oil and gas, what I came away with from this project has very little to do with oil and gas. So when I was talking about the divisions even between the North Island communities, if you expand that to the central and north coast area, that's still a reality. So you're going to find different value systems in Rupert than you are in Masset than you are in Port Hardy than you are in Bella Coola. One of the things I really loved about this group was it did cover the whole spectrum of values and belief systems around oil and gas. Everybody was represented, everybody from the hardline pro to the hardline no and everyone in between. I think it was a great makeup. When we left on this trip, there was a group of people that didn't know each other, came from all over this particular area, thinking, yeah, we're all different. And what I left with, and what I think a lot of people left with, was, hey, wait a minute, we may be all these different communities and we may even have all these different systems, but, when you put us in the context of the bigger picture, all of sudden there's this natural alliance that forms based on our region. So you can have a Russ Hellberg and an Oonagh O'Connor coming from completely different areas, and the one thing we all had in common was our true passion and commitment for this area. Now, my vision to make it healthy and sustainable is very different than Bill's or Russ's or any of those people's. But where we come from, our intent, is totally the same, and I have to respect that. It helped to solidify, to spark a regional identity that didn't exist before.

One of the things that I've struggled with in the work that I do is I kept getting pushed south to do things. Have to deal with Campbell River, have to deal with Nanaimo. It drives me nuts that I cannot jump on a plane from Port Hardy to Prince Rupert. It makes absolutely no sense to me whatsoever, because, when you look at that region, we are a region with similar lifestyles and value systems and structures and, to me, it's a natural linkage, just like there should be a ferry every day to Alert Bay. That should be a natural linkage. Why wouldn't there be? We're two island communities floating out here in the Broughton. Why aren't we more closely aligned? So I think this group helped spur that realization that there is a lot that we could be doing, but that our linkages are still really weak. The next time I'm in a position to be working on a region-wide project of some kind, I'm going to be trying that much harder to pull Rupert and the Queen Charlottes into that, because I have contacts there now. And chances are that, if I'm doing some kind of project that's designed to help a rural coastal community, they're going to benefit more from a program designed in such a fashion than, say, an urban centre like Campbell River, where you're going to need a slightly different design because you are an urban environment.

As many problems as there were with the NCIRP program – and there were, there were lots of little glitches along the way – I think it was a great attempt at trying to do something different in terms of research. I think what all universities need to realize, including UNBC, is that I don't think community collaboration

goes far enough. I read a great article recently by a guy in Scotland, talking about the difference between consultation and engagement. I think that universities are still locked into more of a consultation process in which you have something in mind, you present that to communities to get feedback, and you redesign it given that community feedback. I think for true university-community collaboration to work, it needs to take a true engagement process, where you come with no agenda and you talk to the community and you develop an agenda together, or the community comes to you with an agenda and say, this is what we need. To me, the community is doing the university a favour by allowing the university to research, not the other way around.

Rural communities and coastal communities are vitally important to who we are as a province, and who we are as a country, and who we are as a people, whether we realize it or not. They're important and they're valuable, and they have just as much right to be here as Vancouver. I think it's really important, too, that urban people remember that their wealth is built on the backs of people who live in places like this, and that we carry the risk for everybody else to be wealthy. The only reason there's a Howe Street is because there's a thousand dead fallers. The people who live in places like this choose to live in places like this. They want to be here, they're passionate about being here, they're committed to being here, they're tied to their communities. These are not just places to live, they're not just buildings. I know there are people that live in Vancouver who are committed and passionate about Vancouver and work in their communities and strive to make it a better place. I'm not discounting those people at all. But there's a huge percentage of our population that's migratory. It doesn't matter if I live in Vancouver or Toronto or Montreal or New York or LA or whatever; I'm living in a city and I'm doing a job and that's what I do. That traditional tie that we have to a community is being lost by our urbanization. These communities keep that alive, the fact that we are tied to something greater than just where we live.

We carry the risk for everybody else, and we're never recognized for that. And that's what I don't want to see happen with oil and gas. I don't want to make some other guy in Vancouver rich so my coast can be destroyed with oil, and I can't go catch my crabs anymore, and I can't throw my line off the dock anymore. And that's what'll happen. Terra Nova showed that beautifully. Yeah, chances are slim, really slim, but it can happen here, and then that's it, the coast is gone, there's no saving it, it's gone, done, finished, over. I don't want to carry that risk for the province. I'm not willing to put my entire community and the entire ocean in jeopardy to allow some guy to buy a nicer suit.

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I DON'T WANT TO CARRY THAT RISK FOR THE PROVINCE. I'M NOT WILLING TO PUT MY ENTIRE COMMUNITY AND THE ENTIRE OCEAN IN JEOPARDY TO ALLOW SOME GUY TO BUY A NICER SUIT.



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# OONAGH O'CONNOR

SOINTULA

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IT'S REALLY MADE ME THINK ABOUT ALL THE NOISE HUMANS PUT INTO THE OCEAN WITHOUT THINKING OR QUESTIONING WHAT IT'S LIKE FOR THE MANY ANIMALS THAT LIVE IN THE OCEAN. IT MIGHT BE ONE OF THE MOST SEVERE FORMS OF POLLUTION FOR THE MARINE ANIMALS, YET FOR US IT CAN EASILY GO UNNOTICED AND UNQUESTIONED.

I LIVE IN SOINTULA, OFF THE NORTHEAST SIDE OF VANCOUVER ISLAND. It's an old Finnish village settled around the turn of the century. I came to this area of the coast in 1990 and settled in Sointula in 1995 with my son. Since living in this community I have developed a deep respect for the ocean and all it's wealth. The sea gives us so much food and sustenance. I have never had so much fresh seafood in my life as in the past ten years.

I came up here to go out to the Orca Lab, a whale research station on Hanson Island. Hanson Island is across from Telegraph Cove, just below Alert Bay. There's been an Orca research station there for about thirty years. I spent my first winter on the coast caretaking the Orca Lab; it was an unforgettable experience. It influenced me and the direction of my life and I learned a lot about whales out there because they have hydrophones set up throughout the Johnstone Strait and out into Queen Charlotte Sound as well. You can hear the orcas for miles when they come down into the area. You can hear them calling under the water, but you can also hear the boats, the marine traffic as well. Hearing the whales, listening to them communicate with each other, is almost a mystical experience. More and more, though, it seems that communication is competing with an increase in boat traffic, especially cruise ships. The amount of boat traffic, the increase in marine noise over the fifteen years that I've been going out to Hanson Island, is almost unbearable. I can't imagine what it's like for the marine animals, listening to all that noise. It's really made me think about all the noise humans put into the ocean without thinking or questioning what it's like for the many animals that live in the ocean. It might be one of the most severe forms of pollution for the marine animals, yet for us it can easily go unnoticed and unquestioned.

When I started reading about the different stages of an offshore oil and gas industry, I realized how much the industry would alter the acoustic environment of the ocean, the added industrial noise of seismic blasting, exploratory drilling, development drilling, the boats, the pumps. We wouldn't hear it, but the marine animals sure would. Seismic testing alone has the potential to greatly alter the marine life that's here right now. We don't know exactly what the impacts would be on marine mammals, but we know they're acoustically sensitive, we know that they're already dealing with the impacts of the increase in noise in the marine environment, we know that they rely on sound to find each other, to mate, to find food. It could be devastating to introduce sound as intense as seismic testing to the coastal waters. We don't know to what degree.

Another job I've had since moving up here that has influenced how I think about offshore oil and gas was driving truck for the Sointula Co-op store. One of my greatest learning experiences in that position, which also probably contributed to my perspective on offshore oil and gas, occurred on my first run down island

with the truck. The truck had just come out of the shop, and the other driver was training me. We were just outside Woss on the Island highway when there was a horrible smell, as we slowed down to pull over it became apparent that smoke was billowing out of the motor. So we pulled over and sure enough the oil gasket had sprung a leak and oil had sprayed all over the motor, the underneath of the truck, and the road. By the time we were done it was all over us too. We tried to clean it up, but it was near impossible. It was what some people would say was “only” twenty litres of oil, but it was impossible to clean up. It was on our clothes, it was all over the motor, on the truck, it was on everything. And this was on land, from a truck, and it was impossible to clean up. So it gave me a great deal of respect for what’s actually involved in cleaning up an oil spill and how impossible it really is. It made me question our ability to clean up oil – if it is that hard on land, I just can’t imagine cleaning it out of the ocean.

I started working for an organization here, Living Oceans Society, and that’s how I became involved in the discussion about oil and gas. There were some whispers coming from Prince Rupert about wanting to get the moratorium lifted – this was back in 1999. So we decided we’d look into what was going on with off-shore oil and gas elsewhere and research what it would mean for coastal communities.

But there was one other event that inspired me to get involved in a conversation about offshore oil and gas. Just before I took the position at Living Oceans Society, a friend of mine was visiting. He had worked on the cleanup of the Exxon Valdez spill and he was writing a story about it and had photos of the accident – the oiled animals, the shoreline, the oil a foot deep in the ocean. Some of the images were so devastating I could hardly look at them. The images of the birds and the whales and the sea lions – they were awful – the photos and his stories drove home the reality of our inability to deal with oil in the ocean. It made me realize that having tankers passing through coastal waters, and having this oil and gas pumping out of the seabed is inviting disaster. I’ve heard promoters of the industry tell us how clean and safe offshore oil and gas supposedly is, but when I see the reality of it, I’m not convinced it can be done safely. We’ve been told how great and clean the industry has been on the east coast, but just last November the Terra Nova rig in Newfoundland had a major spill. They said that there was a 1.1 percent chance of a spill that size happening over the lifetime of the project, and it happened within the first two years of production. That is a big lesson. Terra Nova is over two hundred kilometers out to sea. On the coast of BC, we’re talking about inshore waters. An oil spill will not be washed out to sea. It’ll mean oil on the shore. Oil will be circulating in the basin and hitting our beaches, poisoning our food, killing the marine life. That is a huge concern.



When I was offered the job by Living Oceans, I was worried about becoming involved in an issue as important and controversial as offshore oil and gas, but it also felt like something I couldn’t refuse.

At first I was just looking at the issues around coastal communities and threats to coastal ecosystems. My perspective on the issues around offshore oil and gas has broadened quite a bit since then. In terms of looking at this global industry, it’s been eye-opening, because I realize our actions are the beginning of what happens internationally and globally. The decisions we make every day to bike or to drive, or to walk or to drive, or to reuse plastics, or to invest in alternative energy – these are going to affect things internationally.

There are lots of reasons to be concerned about offshore oil and gas and I think one of the major ones, right up there with seismic testing and oil spills, is global warming. We need to start the transition from fos-

oil fuels now. If we just keep opening up new basins of oil and gas, when will the transition ever begin? I've heard it argued that we can explore offshore and begin to invest in alternative fuels, but in my opinion this argument totally misses the point. We as a society have already discovered more fossil fuels than the planet can afford to have burned. This is not the legacy that I want to hand down to my children and grandchildren.

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I DON'T THINK THE GENERATION BEFORE ME HAD THE INFORMATION THAT MY GENERATION HAS TO LOOK AND SAY, 'WAIT A MINUTE, WE'VE MADE A MISTAKE HERE, WE CAN'T BE BURNING FOSSIL FUELS AT THIS RATE.' FOSSIL FUELS TOOK HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF YEARS TO CREATE, AND HERE WERE WE BURNING THEM ALL IN THREE GENERATIONS? IT'S CRAZY AND WE JUST CAN'T KEEP IT UP.

I don't think the generation before me had the information that my generation has to look and say, "wait a minute, we've made a mistake here, we can't be burning fossil fuels at this rate." Fossil fuels took hundreds of millions of years to create, and here we are burning them all in three generations? It's crazy and we just can't keep it up.

We definitely do not need to go into high-risk areas like the Pacific coastal waters to get energy or to create jobs. If we're looking for a secure, sustainable energy supply we have to get off the fossil fuel track. Already the provincial government has budgeted \$20 million promoting offshore oil and gas – that money could have gone into something that would have actually helped diversify rural coastal communities.

Sointula is a commercial fishing community, it's based on a sustainable resource, if managed properly, and it has great possibilities. There are efforts to get a food processing plant here, and we have an abalone co-op that has the potential to be very successful. The money the provincial government has already spent on promoting offshore oil and gas could have easily been invested in sustainable industries, like our abalone co-op, or the food processing, or in marketing value-added resources. These are just examples that I can think of that would help my community. There are more examples up and down the coast, real sustainable opportunities that would keep coastal communities alive and vibrant without threatening the health of the ocean.

In terms of the marine environment, it's very linked to the economy, there is no separation, because so many of the coastal communities and their ways of life are based on the ocean. To make a distinction between environmental concerns and economic concerns is a false separation. When talking about the marine environment, we're also talking about our economy, anything that impacts the marine life impacts our ability to survive economically. That is so obvious when you live in a fishing village, our community relies on the health of the ocean. Developing an offshore oil and gas industry is not a risk that we're willing to take, that I'm willing to take. For me, one of the things I realized through this process was that the people who are on the Community Guidance Group who wanted offshore oil and gas to go ahead seemed to think it was the last hope for our communities in terms of economic survival. That comes from caring about our communities, the same reason that I don't want offshore oil and gas to go ahead, because I care about our communities and I don't think it'll help us in the long run. So there is a common value, and that's caring about the survival of our communities. Our perception of the solution definitely varies.

There was a strong desire by almost everyone in the Community Guidance Group to keep connected and to keep the communication going, to make sure our coastal communities had a voice in dialogues and decisions that will affect our future. I've learned a lot about other coastal communities and the similar challenges we're facing. However we never did figure out how to ensure our communities are heard. I've learned lots from my neighbours up in Haida Gwaii, Bella Coola, Terrace, Prince Rupert and Alert Bay. I'm thankful to know that they're out there and that many of them have similar concerns to me, and I really hope that some day our voices will be heard.

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# GREG WADHAMS

'NAMGIS/ALERT BAY

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WHERE YOU LIVE AND WHAT YOU DO HERE IS MORE THAN A JOB, IT'S A LIFE, IT REALLY IS. IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO ME TO SUSTAIN THAT. I REMEMBER AS A YOUNG FELLOW BOTH BREAKWATERS IN ALERT BAY BEING JUST FULL OF BOATS. NOW THERE'S JUST A HANDFUL OF US COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN LEFT.

**M**Y NAME IS GREG WADHAMS, I'M A 'NAMGIS BAND COUNCILOR and also local president for the Native Brotherhood Fishing Association. There's between twenty-five hundred to three thousand people on the island – about a fifty-fifty split between First Nations and non-First Nations – and our main resource is the sea. The community was totally dependent on fishing in the past, and we continue to try to maintain the resources of the sea. I was born and raised in Alert Bay. I spent a little bit of my childhood at Turner Island where my dad's from. I guess you could call me one of the last of the bona fide fisherman on this island. I went out on the boat initially when I was five years old and I haven't been off. I spent the summer months with my father as I was growing up, I've been running a seine boat since I was eighteen years old, and we're still doing it, fishing for salmon, halibut, herring and other things once in a while.

Where you live and what you do here is more than a job, it's a life, it really is. It's so important to me to sustain that. Basically it's something we all love to do here. We love the life of the sea. It's not just a job – it's a food and it's a way of life for us. It's also a tradition, the resource is all traditionally used and culturally used by First Nations on the coast. Regarding saving our language and our culture, again, it's just like a big circle. I think First Nations revolve around the circle of life and our food line is based on that circle.

Things that have been happening in the past decade are not things we would like to see – like fish farms and other things that are being introduced that are alien to our territory – and now there's oil and gas. We feel that oil and gas, with the Queen Charlotte Basin being the direct mainline to all resources coming into our territory, could really jeopardize us. We could lose our way of life forever. I feel that's one of the biggest challenges facing us. We've had so much in the past that's kind of bugged up and destroyed some of our resources, but we feel oil and gas could jeopardize that forever.

Because of the fish farms, we're having trouble with our wild salmon now with sea lice coming from the farms, and these farmed fish are going up our rivers and streams and amalgamating with our wild stocks, and then there's the logging in our territories. The 'Namgis River used to be one of the strongest sock-eye rivers on the coast, but because of the actions of the province and the federal government, we've



kind of lost that. We are trying to rebuild, and I'm afraid if we get into the oil and gas, we're not going to be able to stop these multimillionaires from doing what they want. We need to look at all of the past effects before we introduce any more risks in the present. It's essential they fix up the mistakes they've made before they even think about trying to do something else that would devastate us. This used to be one of the main fishing ports of BC, we had fisheries right here in the Johnstone Straits. I remember as a young fellow, as a teenager and in my early twenties, both breakwaters in Alert Bay being just full of boats. So yeah, we had a big fleet here. Now there's just a handful of us commercial fishermen left. In reality we won't see those numbers come back again. But there's still the food fishery – we still count on the fish and the shellfish and the bottom fish, the seaweed and the kelp, all the resources. Because of the past pat-

terns around environmental issues, we would like to be able to manage that ourselves, or work together collectively with somebody who's serious about it.

I thought the UNBC project was a really good learning process – the concerns of the coastal communities and the connections. I learned a lot about how we're totally connected to each other. It was a really good thing that happened there by putting us together – it's always felt like we were a lone voice, but I heard a lot of voices with the same tune out there. We heard a lot of concerns, and to me they were all valid. I really feel that it made us a very significant, strong group, and hopefully we can continue to



be a strong group. It was a good process, and even though government didn't know it, I think by putting us together it really connected the coastal communities on these issues and where we're coming from and how we felt. And it wasn't just aboriginal, so that made it really good, it bridged some of those gaps as well. The only thing I didn't care for in the process was that everything seemed so secret and we didn't want to let anything out of the bag, which I agree is how these kinds of processes need to go, but I had a real hard time with the fact I couldn't come home and report and tell my fishing community what happened and tell my council what happened until things were sorted out and we got the reports out. That was the part I didn't like. I would have loved to come back and report on what was happening.

I got involved with the NCIRP process by fluke. There was a meeting in Port Hardy about oil and gas – I didn't know exactly what it was for – but I said I was going to go up and check it out and ask some questions. So I went up there, and I think there was one of the guys from the oil and gas company making a comment, and I got up and I guess I was rude and obnoxious, but at the end it was really funny because the chairperson said, well, we've been looking for a fisherman and I guess you're it. So that's how I got on the Community Guidance Group. I went in very concerned about our fishing fleet and our aboriginal fishermen – basically I was very concerned about the resource. We pretty well all know what could happen. There's so much happening right now – on the east coast with that oil spill, and in Alaska with that spill – and then what happens when they start fooling around exploring the ocean bottom here? I don't know what kind of effects it has on the fish, but I certainly know what sonar does to mammals – when they're up close they get all wacky, they start going up to beaches and stuff like that. I think the seismic's going to

have a huge effect on that stuff. I don't know why the cod has disappeared out there on the East Coast, but I believe that seismic has a lot to do with it, I think it must do some kind of damage to the animals. In reality, science and technology is totally destroying our territory. I don't buy the argument that research and more science and technology is going to improve things. Science and technology equals dollars, and dollars to me don't make any sense when it comes to the resource.

I am totally opposed to lifting the moratorium. There's really no trust for the government's proposals and plans because of what they've been doing to the coast in the last decade. We have no trust in the federal and provincial government because, even at the round table when the fishing fleet was cut in half, they promised a lot of things around royalties and stuff and funding for the old timers, and none of that was accomplished. So we don't believe in promises and the things they say they'll do. If anything was to happen, we sure would like to see, instead of verbally telling us, some kind of contract that they're actually going to do it. That's the biggest thing for First Nations – not just First Nations, I believe coastal communities in general – they've got to be able to trust the governments that have totally abused the coastal communities in the last decade. I'm only speaking for myself, but I can feel it out there from everywhere on the coast – they're mad as hell. I don't think we're going to be able to just sit back and let this happen.

I see the Queen Charlotte Basin as a main funnel for all the resources that give us life down this way. I know the salmon come mainly from the west side of the Queen Charlottes, but on the east side and the top end you have your halibut and bottom fish and you have all your clams and crab and everything else, we have our oolichan at Knight's Inlet, Kingcome Inlet and up in Smith and Rivers Inlet and Bella Coola and all those areas that come down from the Queen Charlotte Basin. No matter which way you look at it, all the resource comes from there. An oil and gas industry could screw that all up. But there's so much going on, and they're so good at their politics and stuff – there's so much bullshit going on right now it's not even funny. You know, they'll just blame global warming or they'll blame El Nino or they'll blame something else. But in reality, what we feel is happening is they're bullshitting their science and technology to make it sound like a good thing, because we've seen it before. We always find out after the fact, and every time they introduce something new, it usually fails.

The prospect of offshore oil and gas exploration here scares me. They can do a lot of promising, but even with First Nations they haven't got any kind of consultation together even though we're supposed to be part of a government to government process. We seem to be the last to know and their idea of consultation is to come to us after the fact, after everything's drafted up on what they're doing, instead of us being a part of that putting the puzzle together. Essentially that's happened with just about all our resources up here, and it keeps on going like that, even though they say they're cooperating with First Nations, they're not. What scares me is the impacts of oil and gas and what can happen, and how long the recovery period is to fix those impacts. Just looking at Alaska, for instance, and the Exxon Valdez oil spill – if we have a disaster like that, how long will it take? They still haven't recovered from that, it's still devastating those communities around there. It's not a good thing, because once you bugger up the beaches – First Nations people believe that when the tide is out your table is set, and this is how we get a lot of our resources like seaweed and shellfish – and if it's screwed up, it's screwed up forever. That takes away your tradition and culture, so we would really hate to see that. It's about life, it's who we are.

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I SEE THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE BASIN AS A MAIN FUNNEL FOR ALL THE RESOURCES THAT GIVE US LIFE DOWN THIS WAY. AN OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY COULD SCREW THAT ALL UP.



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TER AND I'M LOOKING  
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WHEN SHE'S MY AGE.

In an ideal world I would love to see funds to rebuild our resources. I know that's the most difficult thing to do, because science and technology, they don't want to go backwards. But in reality we have too much technology now and everything is getting too big too fast and the world is getting too small too fast. But I would like to see some of those things go back to where they originally were and to rebuild our trees and rebuild our fish and rebuild everything that's natural and cultural to us so our children, for at least the next fifty years, have a chance. I'm holding my little eight-month old granddaughter and I'm looking at her and having a good time with her, but also wondering where she's going to be when she's my age. We can't afford to take any more risks on this coast. I keep harping on that, I know, and I'll continue to harp on it because it's my firm belief – no more risks on this coast until the past mistakes are fixed. That's my dream. That's what I would like to see, because if it's gone, it's gone forever.



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# HENRY SCOW

KWICKSUTAINEUK/GILFORD ISLAND

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ALL THE RIVERS IN OUR TERRITORY SUPPLY US WITH ALL THE THINGS WE NEED, THE STUFF WE'VE HAD AS PART OF OUR HABITAT SINCE THE EARLY DAYS. WE KNOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED, BUT IN THE EARLY DAYS ALL THE FIRST NATIONS HAD THEIR NATURAL FOOD HABITAT RIGHT AT THEIR FINGERTIPS. THAT WAS THEIR GROCERY STORE.

I'M HENRY SCOW AND I'M FROM THE KWICKSUTAINEUK FIRST NATION. My family has been here since time immemorial. I'm the elected chief but I'm also the hereditary chief. My brother, Judge Scow – he was the first Indian lawyer in BC – he turned it over to me in 1996. My father was the hereditary chief of the Kwicksutaineuk tribe in the early days. He got it from his dad, my grandfather Johnny Scow. It goes from father to son to son to son. I have five brothers and seven sisters, so I'm not the next in line, but they all live off reserve down island. The reason they turned it over to me was because I'm the only one that's still close to our territory, so they figured it's best to turn it over to me because I see what's happening in our territory. Now we live in a small community called Gilford Island, but we have a seafood territory consisting of clams, halibut, cod, prawns, scallops, all the seafood that's available in our natural food habitat. All the rivers in our territory supply us with coho, spring, sockeye salmon, and we've also got the deer, moose, cedar bark, all the things we need, the stuff we've had as part of our habitat since the early days.

We know times have changed, but in the early days all the First Nations had their natural food habitat right at their fingertips. That was their grocery store. They knew how to preserve it, they knew how to make it last, and they never exceeded what they needed. They just always made sure they had enough for a certain amount of time until the next part of the food chain was available. They looked after it and maintained it because that was their grocery store. But then the commercial fishing sector came in – and it was wonderful when they started it – but there was no proper management within the fishery sector. That killed off everything. You had a lot of good fishing seasons, but it wasn't properly managed. I've got a map here, all up and down the coast, all the reserves are situated right at the rivers, so the way I see it, the whole natural food habitat that comes out of the rivers belongs to First Nations people. So how did the government take over that? They're part of us. They've been part of us since time immemorial. It's our grocery story. It's really hard to understand where the government's coming from. They're coming at it from the perspective of money. Their whole concept is dollars and cents. But in the early days we didn't have dollars and cents; we had common knowledge, love and respect for the land.

Nowadays, the way I see the oil and gas industry, sure it's a wonderful thing, but the bottom line is all the stakeholders that are involved in it are the same ones that fund the fish farms. I tried to ask this government why they were so intent on putting the fish farms into our territory when it's not their natural habitat. Those big oil companies are connected to the fish farms, their ownership's all the same, because I don't see how those fish farm organizations can come up with the kind of dough they must've lost over the years – there's millions and millions of morts, dead fish, that come out of those camps every year.

This process with UNBC, it was a lot better than what we got stuck with when the fish farm industry came in without us knowing. At least with the gas and oil they gave us the opportunity to go out and study it and see what's happening on the East Coast and that was really very good. It didn't change my outlook on what we've been brought up with on the coast here. There are a lot of things out there within the industry – like the seismic testing – that I'm worried about with the Queen Charlotte Basin. That's where our natural food habitat go out when they migrate out to the ocean. I think we have more bottom activity on the Pacific coast than they do on the east coast. You've got halibut, cod, black cod, deep sea prawns, you've got a big area there. And our waters are a lot shallower than the East Coast. There's a big difference. Between the Queen Charlottes and the mainland here, the water doesn't get that deep. So the process has shed some light on my understanding of the industry, but the bottom line is there's going to have to be a lot of people going to school to really get into it. The stakeholders are the ones who are really advancing things until it comes to the stage where there's work in it. At that stage of the game they hire people from out of



the country rather than people who come from the area where they're going to drill. There'll be a few benefits in some areas, but not to the extent that we can all benefit.

We're at the bottom end of the Queen Charlotte Basin so we're concerned about our natural food chain and our clam beaches and everything. That's all we're worried about. The main industry is going to be out in the Queen Charlotte Basin. But any kind of accident would go a long ways in a matter of hours, and they haven't really got any foolproof plan yet for it if something does happen. I have nothing against progress, but we were

brought up in a different way of life and we've been adapted to it and we like it and we don't want to change it. We were born with it.

It's hard to see how an oil and gas industry would work when you've got so many unknowns. The government doesn't give you the full story as to what they know. Look what's happening to us now. They knew all the common factors with the sea lice problem that happened before fish farming was even brought to the BC coast. But when they plunked the fish farms in our territory, none of the First Nations people were given that opportunity to sit down with government and say, okay, this is what happened overseas. There was no consultation. Now everybody knows what is needed to operate these vessels, these cars, ferry boats and everything else. We need oil and gas. But everyone has to come to an understanding. We've got to protect our traditional territories too, so our natural habitat will always be there. We need a foolproof plan to make it work, and unfortunately there is no such thing. Like the book says, information, knowledge and wisdom, and that all has to work together – and we haven't really worked together in that manner since the advent of the white man.

You know, the schools are out there and there are a lot of young people out there, and they should take these courses and get busy on it because no matter how you look at it we're going to need the oil and gas. If we were in the Queen Charlotte Islands I might have a different attitude because it's right at their doorstep, but I'm way down at the bottom of the line, right at the bottom of the Queen Charlotte Basin. But anyway, I see there's this pipeline where all these First Nations people are running it back east somewhere, they're getting employment from it. If anyone sets their mind to it, I guess we'll have to adapt to it, because we've had to adapt to everything else. There's no such thing as impossible, but we just need to find ways to protect it and find ways where it works both ways. We're not trying to change the face of the world, but we need to protect the natural food habitat that has been given to us from time immemorial. We have to be protected, too.

If we look after it and maintain it the way it's supposed to be, we all can live a happy life. But if it's going to be abused in any way, it's not going to work. It's the same with our lifestyle – if we abuse ourselves with drugs and alcohol, our system doesn't work and we fall apart. So, that's the way I look at it. We have to love and respect the lifestyle that was given to us. And we have to love and respect what's all around that territory – all the fish, the sea life – they have the same right to live as us. They need to have places where they can be born, places where they can spawn, places where they can go to die, the same things we want to have. So like I say, I have nothing against progress, but the bottom line is it has to be treated in a proper manner where it's going to be feasible for everyone.

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# KATE PINSONNEAULT

ECHO BAY

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THE BROUGHTON ARCHIPELAGO IS NOT VERY DENSELY POPULATED WITH ONLY ABOUT A HUNDRED AND FIFTY PEOPLE LIVING IN THIS VERY REMOTE AREA OF OVER TWENTY THOUSAND SQUARE KILOMETRES. I CAN'T EVEN CALL IT RURAL BECAUSE IT'S REALLY MORE WILD THAN RURAL.

I LIVE ON MY HOUSEBOAT IN THE BROUGHTON ARCHIPELAGO, WHICH IS the most amazing collection of sheltered islands and mountainous inlets. The area is not very densely populated with only about a hundred and fifty people living in this very remote area of over twenty thousand square kilometres. I can't even call it rural because it's really more wild than rural. I have lived mostly in the Echo Bay area. It's not really a community as most people would define it. The homes are very spread out. Every sheltered bay with a stream has a home. Because people get around by boat, they need a protected place so their docks, boats and float homes are not damaged in rough weather. The stream provides a constant supply of fresh water.

The people living here lead a very different life. Any cell phone will tell you that this is a “no service area.” There are none of the services that most people take for granted. There is no television or radio reception. There are no police, fire fighters, medical personnel. The nearest McDonalds is about three hundred kilometres away. No phone system works. The only reliable telecommunications is the VHF radio. People who live out here have to be very independent and self reliant. When tourists arrive in the summer, there is one question that they ask more than any other: “What do you do in winter?” It's very hard for them to imagine. I am now leery of this as I know full well it is just a lead-in to a series of questions: “Where do you get your groceries?” “How do you generate power?” “Where do you get your drinking water?” “What if you need a doctor?” I can appreciate how difficult it is for people to comprehend what it would be like to have no repairmen, hydro power, hospitals, roads and cars, restaurants, stores, etc. To live here, you must be self-sufficient. People generate their own power, mostly with solar panels. Drinking water comes from the nearest stream. Scheduling anything depends on the weather.

The people are very connected to the marine environment. Not only is it their only means of transportation, it is also their main source of food. Everyone gathers food from the sea – salmon, clams, kelp, prawns, sea cucumbers, rock cod, sea lettuce, halibut, shrimp, etc. Most people earn their living from the sea. They are also very connected to each other. People living in this remote area have to depend on their neighbours. Whether it's someone putting up a new roof, the salmon hatchery catching brood stock, or the children at the one-room schoolhouse putting on a fundraising event, the whole community is there to help. These are people who know how to work together and support one another.

I've been here since '86. I had been working in Vancouver in psychiatric services for children. My training is in special education. I came up here for a job working with preschool-aged children with special needs throughout the Mt. Waddington Regional District. It was a job I loved. It was also a wonderful introduction

to the different communities in the North Island area. When housing prices started going up and the cost of boats was going down, it occurred to me that we had a rare opportunity to trade in the mortgage to buy a houseboat and explore this beautiful area. Originally I thought we would spend a year or two cruising the coast, but it soon became a lifestyle that my family cherished. My three girls were so free from social and commercial pressures, it was wonderful to see them so at ease with themselves and their lives.

Eventually I took a job as the Stewardship Coordinator for the Broughton Archipelago. There was so much that needed to be done. By the mid-90s, fish populations, one after another, were failing. It really hit hard in '99 when the coho crashed. I found my background in special education coming to the forefront. When a child is not thriving, it is important to find out the reasons as early as possible. I would start by gathering the child's medical history and then doing a developmental assessment to determine the specific areas that were a concern and identifying those areas that were strengths. I would then put together a remedial program or, if necessary, make a referral to a paediatric specialist.



Similarly, as the Stewardship Coordinator, the first thing I did was gather the historical information about the salmon runs and their natal streams. Then I arranged for local training through the Streamkeepers program so residents could learn standardized methods for assessing stream health. We assessed about twenty streams, determining what the problem areas were and what was needed. Concerns ranged from habitat destruction to water quality problems such as low Ph (water that is too acidic) to problems with water volume (when the headwaters are logged, there is nothing to hold back the heavy rains in these very steep valleys, so the ensuing floods turn meandering streams into chutes bringing down huge amounts of substrate followed by drought conditions when the rain stops.) Eventually, the money DFO was providing for stewardship efforts stopped. The DFO guardians and the person doing the annual creel survey also lost their contracts. It seemed that wild fish were no longer a government priority. To this day, nothing has been done by the governments responsible for our wild fisheries to address the needs of our wild salmon.

Living here has really opened me up to the way people have been living for a very long time. We are very connected to nature here. I never thought of the tide or wind when I was living in the city, but when you're out here, it's most important. Getting mail, going to town for a dentist appointment, getting the kids off to school, visiting with friends – it all depends on what the weather is doing. If it's blowing hard, you just don't leave the house. Living on a boat makes one very aware of the natural cycles. You get into the rhythm of the tides and the seasons. Winter is the time to get your lanterns and shovels to go clam digging when the night tides are at their lowest. This is when the swans are feeding in the estuaries. By February or March, the smallest salmon have left their streams to be pushed along by the tides, feeding along the shoreline. It is also the time that the herring arrive flashing their silver bodies letting cormorants and seals know that it is time to eat well before their babies arrive. By early summer, the salmon are here, followed by the orca whales. The resident orcas stay around until the fall when the salmon make their way upstream to spawn. This is the time that the bears and eagles are feasting. Late fall is the best time to see the "phosphores-

cence.” These are tiny sea creatures that communicate with light. When disturbed, they glow in the water. One September night I had a porpoise dive under my kayak. It was like a fireball shooting through the water leaving a long trail of glitter. There is always a predictable cycle. When this cycle is altered, one witnesses the effects. When the salmon runs crash, you see the eagles attacking herons on the dock because they have nothing to eat. You see the bears coming around, hopeful for food. When they’re really starving they come right down to people’s homes and try to get in. This is often their last desperate act.

A lot of the local residents have been fishing through many generations. Many of them still have their grandfather’s boats, which were passed down to them. They’re out fishing from the time they’re four years old. It’s just what they do. And they know how good it can be. They have an intimate knowledge of these fish and their cycles and they’re frustrated at the apathy of governments and industries that allow the destruction of an important public resource and a life that they love. Salmon are a fast renewable resource if managed properly, providing huge benefits to the provincial economy, the coastal eco-system and to local communities. Logging and fish-farming continue to negatively impact local salmon runs and nothing is being done to rectify the problems in our area. Maybe it’s because we are so remote that no one cares. It’s almost like, if you are not on a highway where the public can see what’s going on, the problems don’t exist.

The only thing that changed this was whale researcher, Alex Morton. When suddenly the whales stopped showing up, she was astounded and intrigued. The orcas had always followed the salmon into this area. She talked to another researcher and they realized the whales had completely changed their predictable route. Being a researcher studying whale vocalizations, Alex had hydrophones set up so she could hear



the whales approaching and study their sounds. These underwater microphones helped her understand the reason for the whale’s sudden avoidance of the Broughton Archipelago. Acoustic harassment devices from the fish farms created sounds so loud and powerful, that they were too painful for the orcas to be within the area. She found that the sound from these devices traveled for great distances underwater and ricocheted off the rock cliffs.

While Alex was looking into how fish farms were impacting the resident orcas, a local sport fishing lodge owner showed up one day with salmon smolts being eaten alive by sea lice. No one had ever seen this before. Another change in the natural cycles had occurred. Alex started looking into this and soon realized that in the early spring, there is no natural host for sea lice as there is really no salmon around through the winter. But now with the Broughton Archipelago having the highest density of salmon farms on the Pacific Coast, the sea lice had a plentiful year round host. Alex immediately informed DFO and began studying the range of this problem. Neither the federal nor provincial governments that have a mandate to protect our wild fish responded. In fact, her attempts to inform the government were met with patronizing rejection of her findings and, later, ridicule and threats. We’re on our fifth year of the worst sea lice epidemic that has ever occurred on the Pacific coast, and nothing is being done. Alex has written thousands of letters to governments and scientists trying to get some focus on this problem and some help for our wild salmon. We are now losing hope. Some runs, like the Viner River Chum, are at the brink of extinction.

Part of the reason oil and gas has met so much resistance is that people here have a history with governments and industries that has led to mistrust and betrayal. Where assurances were given and regulations

were promised for salmon aquaculture, most have now been broken. A great deal of time was invested through a number of government processes to establish regulations and acceptable areas for fish farming that would not impact wild fish or their habitat. Today, most of these recommendations have never been followed. Fishermen are very secretive and they don't really want to disclose where they fish. But they were open with the government, telling officials where the best fishing spots were, where the migration routes are, and where the nursery and feeding areas are located. At first, there was an effort to establish red zones where no fish farms would be allowed, yellow zones for areas where caution should be used, and green zones for areas suitable for fin fish aquaculture. Of the twenty-seven farms out here right now, all but four are in red zones. So people have been wondering, why did we bother spending all this time and effort when it didn't matter? Although the people here provided the information asked for in good faith and were reassured that the wild fish would be protected, it appears that the companies will get what they want with the blessing of both the federal and provincial governments, regardless of the impacts to our wild salmon.

Our First Nations had their pick of the real estate and they wanted to be here. People have lived in the Broughton Archipelago for thousands of years and this area has a different history from many coastal communities. The population is still primarily First Nations who have a sacred connection to the salmon. By the turn of the century, non-Native settlers had established themselves in this area making a good living from fishing, log salvaging, trapping, and logging. These coastal people raised their children in float houses and fishing boats, unaffected by the Great Depression that impacted most North Americans in the thirties. There are other communities in the region that have been settled in First Nations territories for over one hundred years. These communities still rely heavily on seasonal, coastal jobs such as clam digging, whale watching, tree planting, prawning, salal picking, log salvaging, milling, research, or fishing. It has always been a life of plenty, where neighbours take care of each other, and where no one goes without. People who have lived here have a deep appreciation for where they live.

One hundred years ago, there were no communities in places like Port McNeill or Woss. In the 1960s and 70s, small logging businesses were being replaced by large corporate operations. Logging camps turned into company towns, where secure union jobs, doing regular shift work were available. People came to make money. And they did. But now that forestry, mining, and fishing have collapsed, and scientific evidence is suggesting that open-net aquaculture in salmon habitat is negatively impacting wild stocks, the big question is, what can be done to continue employing people who moved here for company jobs?

The difference in values and lifestyle is causing a divide throughout the coastal communities of the Queen Charlotte Basin. There are generations of people here that live a life that is sacred to them. They want it protected and preserved so this abundance will be available for their children and grandchildren. In some towns, unemployed people are hoping that another company will come in and hire them. Here in Echo Bay, it's so different because no one is employed full-time. People just do what they need to do to get them through the year. In places like Port Hardy, life is much more nine-to-five.

When I worked as the Stewardship Coordinator, there was a lot of concern and debate over logging and fish farming practices. So every month we had a meeting. People from governments, First Nations organizations, companies, environmental groups, fishermen – anybody whose activities affected fish or fish habitat – were invited to attend. It was amazing how just getting the dialogue going helped people better understand the issues. On one occasion, the public was outraged at Interfor for logging a certain area. But when we all sat down at the table, we learned that the company also didn't want to log it, but had to because the provincial government was expecting the stumpage. Another example was a concern raised about underwater lights at

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AT FIRST, THERE WAS AN EFFORT TO ESTABLISH RED ZONES WHERE NO FISH FARMS WOULD BE ALLOWED, YELLOW ZONES FOR AREAS WHERE CAUTION SHOULD BE USED, AND GREEN ZONES FOR AREAS SUITABLE FOR FIN FISH AQUACULTURE. OF THE TWENTY-SEVEN FARMS OUT HERE RIGHT NOW, ALL BUT FOUR ARE IN RED ZONES. SO PEOPLE HAVE BEEN WONDERING, WHY DID WE BOTHER SPENDING ALL THIS TIME AND EFFORT WHEN IT DIDN'T MATTER?



fish farms and their relationship to infection by the IHN virus . We heard that the reason the farmers use lights is because the fish grow faster with more light. The concern local residents had was that light in the water attracts wild fish. When a fish farm has a deadly viral disease, attracting wild fish is not a good idea. Then one farm after another caught the IHN virus. There's no vaccine. In some cases, they did complete culls of the farms. People asked if the fish farms could turn out the lights to avoid attracting wild fish, infecting them, and spreading the disease. You could almost see the light go on with some of the company people. They're just not thinking about what's going on outside their open-net pens.

One of the biggest challenges of working with such a diverse group was communication. Words like "sustainability" or "consultation" have very different meanings

to different people from different backgrounds. We had to take the time to define and clarify language used throughout the meetings. But having this kind of dialogue was important and productive. It needs to happen with oil and gas too. People here are afraid, mistrustful and sceptical. Others are hopeful that local jobs will be created and communities will regain some economic stability. But we need an opportunity to discuss the issues and to make informed decisions on how we will meet the needs of our families and communities without threatening a culture and our common resources that are so precious to us. What legacy do we leave our children? And how can one community have their needs met without it being an affront to their neighbours?

The UNBC program has been a great start. I came in just after the East Coast trip. Michael Berry in Alert Bay got me involved, because part of my job as Stewardship Coordinator was to distribute information, from scientific publications to government news releases. He thought it sounded like a job for me. I really didn't know much about oil and gas but I did have concerns around seismic testing in an environment this rich and diverse. But that was all I had an opinion about. I went into the NCIRP process not having a lot of faith that we would accomplish much. Now I really see how important it is to have a diverse group of coastal people starting that dialogue. I must say, I learn so much from people like Diane and being able to go to Kitimat and see how it's a very different community. But then going to the Queen Charlotte's felt just like home (we even stayed on a boat!) The process has connected us in an unexpected way. My sense of "region" has been broadened. We haven't had regional links with the North Coast communities, and yet the lifestyle, the priorities, and value systems, and the issues are so similar. This is the first opportunity that we have had to meet as a region to discuss an issue of mutual importance. And that alone is huge. The dialogue needs to continue. I think a lot of times, people think elected leaders should speak for their constituents, and that the decision-making should be left up to the politicians. But there is something very special about having people who are concerned, knowledgeable and passionate offer a strong voice for their communities. These were people who were involved, people with an understanding of the needs of their community and what the next steps might be. We need to hear what communities hope for and what's important to them.

I still don't feel UNBC is linked very well with the coastal communities, although that doesn't mean it can't be. I do see the need for some recognized body to give some direction to this important process. I think if UNBC did more community outreach, it would make those links stronger. Another thing I've found in the Broughton Archipelago is that when scientists or bureaucrats come to talk to local people, it's like they're talking a different language. We had a meeting once with two people from the Ministry of the Environment who ended up being stranded in Echo Bay because of the weather. They had spent hours talking to us, nodding their heads, taking notes. When we were having dinner with them later, someone again raised a concern they had about the redds in a stream that was experiencing extreme floods and drought so that

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WHAT LEGACY DO WE LEAVE OUR CHILDREN? AND HOW CAN ONE COMMUNITY HAVE THEIR NEEDS MET WITHOUT IT BEING AN AFFRONT TO THEIR NEIGHBOURS?

some redds where being washed out while others were left high and dry. One of the government reps leaned over to me and asked, "What is a redd anyway?" At that moment I realized that they had no idea what we were talking about. The redds are the gravel nests of salmon eggs, and because of changes to the environment, there is not enough water to cover the eggs. It was crucial information we had been sharing. If it wasn't for the weather, they would have left with no real idea of what we were even talking about. That situation did make me wonder how often that's happened, where people are talking but not really being understood. Open and honest communication is crucial, but it takes time. The only way to make it happen is with face-to-face meetings with a skilled facilitator. Connecting communities and making sure communication is flowing will help facilitate a much needed process to meet community needs in a way that doesn't threaten other people.

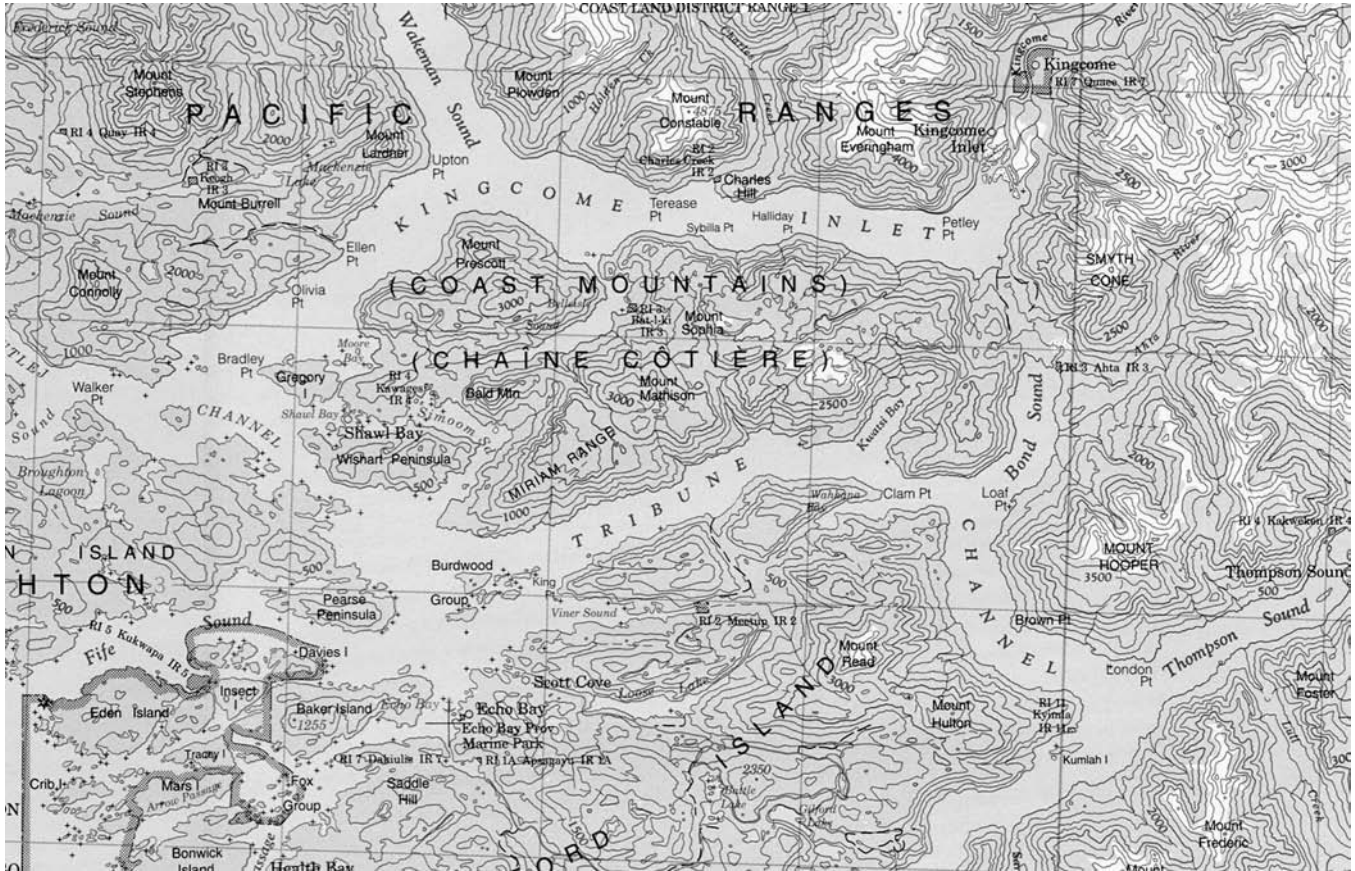
I wonder why the oil and gas industry doesn't start developing on land and get local people trained and hired to do the work. I don't yet understand why that's not happening. It would avoid the whole issue of negative impacts to the marine environment. If something went wrong, it would be easier to deal with it on land, where if something happened twenty kilometres from our shores, it could be devastating. In time our developing technology will allow horizontal drilling to reach pockets below the sea bed, avoiding the need for ocean-based oil and gas development. I do see the need for, and the benefits that could come with, an oil and gas industry. But I also see that there is not much hope of creating local jobs or it being a huge economic boost to this region if it is conducted in the marine environment. That's one thing that became really clear during this process. There won't be a lot of jobs coming out of this and I think that's going to disappoint many.

Some people think huge disasters will happen, others say technology will prevail and we won't have to worry. It's not even a matter of how much oil is spilled, but when it will happen, and what the weather will be at that time. There was a small spill in Newfoundland recently, but it happened when there were thousands of migratory birds in the area. It was the timing that made it a horrible thing. To me, that's the worrisome part. During certain times even a small spill could do a lot of damage.

Oil and gas development in the marine environment doesn't fit here, but I could see it on land in Kitimat, in Port Hardy or the Queen Charlotte Islands. But to have oil and gas development in the rich marine ecosystem when there are so many unknowns, extreme weather, and earthquakes, doesn't sound like a wise idea. If there was a spill when it was blowing a hurricane force wind in such a remote area, I don't see how they could even respond in time. Response time is an important issue. Sometimes we'll hear a "Mayday" distress call. When it's a boat going down or someone in the water, it's so sad when you can only listen and hope and wait and pray that it will turn out okay. But depending on the location and the weather conditions, sometimes you just know that no one is going to get to those guys before hypothermia sets in. It's heart-breaking. An oil spill in the near shore environment would be the same. We'll be hoping for the best, but know that it will likely result in disaster.



It's a different life here. It's difficult for many people to understand or appreciate that there are people able and wanting to live off the sea. It is part of our coastal heritage. It is a wonderful life. It doesn't seem fair to jeopardize our children's future for the short-term economic gain that essentially benefits urban centres and the US. And for what? If we keep the fish, it will keep us rich in food forever. The oil and gas industry can't do that. Any benefits from that industry would be few and temporary. What will coastal residents get out of it? And if there is a disaster, what will we be left with? These questions deserve our consideration.



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# MERV CHILD

TSAWATAINEUK/KINGCOME INLET/VICTORIA

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I'M NOT LOOKING AT AN ISSUE – FOR INSTANCE, OIL AND GAS, OR ANY RESOURCE ISSUE – STRICTLY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE YOU MIGHT FIND FROM A BAND COUNCIL OR SOMEONE WHO'S BEEN INVOLVED IN THIS FOR SOME TIME AND HAS, IN THEIR OPINION, BEEN CONSISTENTLY SCREWED OVER BY INDUSTRY OR BY THE PROVINCE.

I'M IN A DIFFERENT SITUATION THAN EVERYONE ELSE IN THAT I DON'T actually live full-time in the Queen Charlotte Basin area. I live in Victoria, I was born and raised here. My native community is a place called Kingcome Inlet, which is located on the lower central coast in the Port McNeill area. If you were in Port McNeill and you flew east, you would eventually come to it. My mom was raised in Kingcome Inlet. She spent winters there and summers elsewhere, or traveled around with the seasons when she was younger. She went to residential school in Alert Bay, nursing school after that. She moved down here, met my dad and they started a family. I was born and raised here, but I have lots of family and relatives up there. So I have that connection to the area, but I also do a lot of work for the First Nations up there – there's two tribal councils whose membership comprises thirteen nations, and there's one other nation I work with, so there's fourteen nations up there I work for on various land and resource issues, and I've been doing that for about six or seven years now. I've been a lawyer for ten years now. I went to school at UVic. My practice over the last couple of years has gone away from the strict legal practice. I don't practice litigation anymore, and most of my work now is falling into the consulting realm, although I do still do some legal work.

It's in that capacity that I first met Norman Dale. He was doing some similar work with the Nuxalk. I got to know him quite well, we collaborated on a number of projects together, so I guess that's why he gave me a call to see if I'd be interested in participating in this project. So the question, 'What's the name of your community?' was an issue that we dealt with when the project first started up. Norman wanted to make it very clear to everybody that they weren't there representing their community; they were just there as individuals at large, coming there with their own perspectives and what not. Given who I work for, it's important that that gets out there in terms of my participation. I needed to make it clear that I'm not there representing fourteen tribes on this issue. I was just there as myself trying to bring my perspective to this thing and learn some new things.

I think my background and upbringing gives me a somewhat broad perspective on things. I'm not looking at an issue – for instance, oil and gas, or any resource issue – strictly from the perspective you might find from a band council or someone who's been involved in this for some time and has, in their opinion, been consistently screwed over by industry or by the province. I come at it somewhat more with an open mind, seeing more of the possibilities rather than seeing how First Nations are going to get screwed again.

Whether or not I'm correct in that assumption I don't know.

In terms of the native communities, the biggest hurdle I think they face is resolving the land question, and doing it in an expedited manner, so they can have some access to resources and a level of economic self-

sustainability. You go to reserves and there's ninety percent unemployment. We've got to address that issue. I know a lot of nations involved in the treaty process and other initiatives with governments, and ultimately they're trying to address that issue through negotiations. That's one of the biggest hurdles, as well as something I'm not too familiar with, but the host of social problems that you find on reserves too. That's a huge issue and it's got to be resolved, but how you do that I don't know.

When I first came on board with the Community Guidance Group, I looked at it as an opportunity to learn about this issue. I've been talking to folks that I work with in the nations, telling them that this was an issue that was coming, and it was coming fast, and that they needed to get involved in some manner. We were sort of sitting on the sidelines, through no one's fault, it's just that no one had taken the initiative to address this issue in any way. So I saw it as an opportunity to go out there and learn about the issue personally, with the goal ultimately of trying to bring the information back to communities.



The East coast study trip was wildly successful. I learned a lot, and it was a big eye-opener, it was great. Given who I work for, I've been very careful not to come out publicly and say I'm for it or I'm against it. I think if you talk to anyone in the Community Guidance Group, they may not be able to tell you where I stood on this issue. I publicly sort of sat on the fence. The reason was very purposeful: I didn't want to be prejudging anything the nations would say. I just went there with the goal of taking in information and learning as much as I could, rather than making my mind up one way or the other.

So we came back – the trip was in late October 2003 and I think the first meeting was in December up in Port Hardy – and my biggest question at the meeting was, What are we doing? What's our job? What's our focus? What are we going to do? It was always fuzzy to what exactly the Community Guidance Group was going to do after the trip. I had no idea. And it wasn't answered then. Eventually it turned out we were to provide input on the Northern Coastal Information and Research Program research reports. Then, as things went on, there seemed to be a yearning by a lot of the group members to have a life, or a function beyond that. It wasn't spelled out by UNBC, because we were brought together by UNBC to do the trip and the four reports. But there was always this yearning – not by all members, but by most members – to have this function beyond that. But it never really crystallized, in my opinion. I thought the process was successful in terms of the trip and the reports, it was useful in terms of education and learning. But the

whole aspect of trying to define a larger role for the group I found kind of futile. I felt there was some good promise for the group. We were talking about doing some additional projects. One of them was the layperson's guide, which was excellent. We brainstormed on a number of other projects, and we whittled them down to the top four, then we broke into groups and said, okay, this sub-group will do this, and that sub-group will do this, and everybody left with an action plan. But it never came together. Some of the groups did their work, but it never went to the next step at the subsequent meeting. I suppose it's because the funding situation with UNBC was problematic. We were running out of money. Had there been additional funds to do some of that work, I think it might have been better.

I did meet a lot of people who I hadn't known before. Now I think I've got friends up and down the coast – people in Haida Gwaii, Melinda, Diane in Kitimat – you know, these are people who are still involved in this issue, are going to be involved in this issue, and I hope to be as well. So I consider them friends now and I see us working together in the future on this issue, particularly the First Nations folks. What I hear from our nations is the need to develop an alliance with the other coastal First Nations on this issue. So now I know the people to talk to, to begin that process, so that's hugely valuable. And the non-First Nations folks as well – the POEA and PCOOGA folks, I'm communicating with them quite a bit on different issues. And then Diane, I see Diane from time to time at different functions. I would suspect a lot of people dropped out of the group because, in a sense, at a lot of the meetings themselves, when a lot of the discussions started, the discussions really got taken over by the "anti" folks, so all the "pro" guys just didn't feel all that comfortable being there.

As for the larger community's awareness of the project, if you were to talk to a lot of the folks here on the coast who were involved with the issue, or at least the immediate core group I work with, they were aware of the \$2 million grant to UNBC, and their view was immediately that, well, they're giving money to UNBC so UNBC is going to come out with these pro-government things. I said, well, in my view, we shouldn't be so cynical; universities are independent and they guard that quite well. And as the reports are coming out, people are seeing them, and they're coming around on that view. But there was always this sense out there that we're doing this with UNBC, and people say, well why UNBC? Why Prince George? They're not on the coast. They're a northern community, but they're not a northern coastal community. So there's always been that disconnect, and I think that's still there in many people's minds.

It's hard to say what the impacts of oil and gas development are going to be. I can tell you what I see as some of the risks, as well as what the potential benefits could be. If it goes ahead, I would hope it goes ahead in a manner that is the most environmentally sensitive or environmentally friendly manner possible. If you look beyond what is out there right now, the First Nations are deathly concerned about their marine way of life, the threat of their sustenance harvesting being sacrificed by an oil spill. That's their huge concern. They're just terrified of it happening. I was at a meeting yesterday with the fourteen nations. We were trying to put together a strategy on what we're going to do over the next few months on this issue. The discussion that ensued – I've never seen such emotion or heard it in people's voices around this issue. I



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FOR MANY BRITISH COLUMBIANS, IT'S BEYOND THEIR WAY OF THINKING JUST HOW TIED COASTAL FIRST NATIONS ARE TO THEIR MARINE ENVIRONMENT, AND JUST HOW MUCH THEY SAFEGUARD AND WANT TO PROTECT THAT FOREVER. ONE MASSIVE OIL SPILL OUT THERE COULD WIPE THAT OUT.

don't think you'd find any First Nation member up there who would say they were in favour of this industry. There is uniformity in the view that they don't want it to happen, but there is also a strong belief that, if it does happen, they've got to be prepared for it. They've got to be prepared to make it as safe as possible, for the environment and for their way of life. And secondly – and this point of view is not uniformly held – if it does happen, they need to be part of it, share in the benefits in some manner. I get that sense from a lot of folks, but then you get the other folks saying, no, we don't want any part of it. The discussion is ongoing. They're saying they don't want it, but a lot of people recognize that it's almost inevitable, it's going to happen at some time in the not too distant future, and when it does, they have to be prepared to deal with it as best as they can, and if they lose that fight, be prepared to engage it and advocate their values and their interests in the issue. That's the work I've been doing with them, trying to get them to realize what their interests and their values are and move forward and develop a strategy to protect them.

Coastal First Nations, their entire way of life is based on the marine environment. Transportation, cultural and spiritual values, sustenance – they are marine people. If that way of life is severed, then I don't know where they are. It's hugely critical that that be protected against resource development, in this case oil and gas. It's an issue that, for many British Columbians, it's beyond their way of thinking just how tied coastal First Nations are to their marine environment, and just how much they safeguard and want to protect that forever. One massive oil spill out there could wipe that out. You could have the highest safety standards out there, and, as we saw a few weeks ago in Newfoundland, one screwup and you've got 10,000 barrels of oil out there. If it happens here, it's going to end up on the coast. They're saying the chances of a large oil spill are between one in 10,000 or one in 100,000 for a big, big spill. You look at those odds, and the odds are small. But the question becomes, what if you are that one? If that one was in the Queen Charlotte Basin and it came ashore, the effects would be huge for the people who live there. So I want people to know just how important that way of life is to these people. I think it's a British Columbia issue. But more importantly it's a Queen Charlotte Basin issue. It's an issue that I think has to be decided by the people who live there, because they're the ones who are going to get screwed if things go wrong.



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# SAM MOODY

NUXALK/BELLA COOLA

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WE UTILIZED ALL OF MOTHER NATURE'S BOUNTY IN A BALANCED WAY, TAKING ONLY TO MEET OUR NEEDS. TRADITIONAL NUXALK BELIEF STATES THAT ALL CREATION HAS SPIRIT AND THIS SPIRIT IS ACKNOWLEDGED WITH RESPECT WHEN WE UTILIZE MOTHER NATURE'S GIFTS FOR OUR BENEFIT.

**N**UXALK SPIRITUAL THOUGHT IS DIRECTLY CONNECTED TO GREAT SPIRIT and Mother Earth and all that she provides for us, which we regard as sacred. Traditional Nuxalk culture would acknowledge Mother Earth every fall for six weeks during October and November, and every man, woman and child would offer thanks for the bountiful season. A prayer song would be offered during this six weeks of celebration, whereby each would contribute to this time of gratitude and contribute to the planning of an even more bountiful season in the next year. We utilized all of Mother Nature's bounty in a balanced way, taking only to meet our needs. Moreover, everyone utilized their special skills and knowledge to improve the quality of community life and to ensure benefits were distributed evenly throughout the community. Traditional Nuxalk belief states that all creation has spirit and this spirit is acknowledged with respect when we utilize Mother Nature's gifts for our benefit.

The coming of the European people has affected our Nuxalk connection with Mother Earth and the bounty she offers to our people. Our loss comes in many forms: loss of spiritual connection, of traditional culture, of language, of traditional stewardship of Nuxalk territory, of balanced self-sufficiency of our resources, of self-esteem, confidence and discipline, etc. There are many other forms of loss that we have experienced, and although we realize that we can minimize our losses, we willingly sacrifice our valuable resources to survive and meet our daily needs. Like the salmon resources, our forest resources seemed to be inexhaustible. Big business came to our community offering jobs and money, and of course many of us did work in the forest industry. Many Nuxalkmc were encouraged to quit school early and work in the logging industry. The fishing and logging companies lured many Nuxalkmc to participate in both industries with promises of good income. However, many of the Nuxalkmc were relegated to menial labour jobs, and as a result many did not attempt to complete school.

My father often encouraged me to stay in school at least to complete Grade 12. He had the foresight to understand that the logging industry was not going to last much longer. However, he said I was free to make my own decision. I quit school mid-term in Grade 12 and decided to go logging. My logging career was cut short during my second year when I was nearly crushed by a log, doing serious damage to my head and legs. The blessing in this accident was that it offered me the opportunity to complete my high school studies, and I graduated with fairly high grades. Completing school opened some doors for me to consider other education opportunities and employment. Accounting was my early choice of endeavour. After my second year in my accounting program, I was hired in a Native arts and crafts retail outlet in Vancouver. I soon learned that there were good opportunities in marketing First Nations products. I ran Bella Coola Smokehouse producing commercially smoked salmon for eight years during the late 1970s

and early '80s. We became quite successful in marketing spring salmon and sockeye internationally to the Jewish and Japanese markets. Since then, economic development has been a passion of mine, and I have sought out economic-related work with various First Nations communities throughout BC.

When the opportunity to participate with UNBC's NCIRP Community Guidance Group came up, I readily agreed to participate. Although my knowledge about offshore oil and gas development was limited, I saw the possibility of it becoming a reality some time in the future. However, there seemed to be so many unknown factors regarding the industry that I felt it was important to bring information and awareness to our community. I believe that research and data gathering is essential to the economic community building process. However, communities must decide if they want to see offshore oil and gas development in their respective territories. My decision to participate with the Community Guidance Group was made to gather information and data so that we can determine how our marine resource might be impacted by offshore oil and gas development. As a Nuxalk member, I recognized the opportunity to share experiences with other First Nations and non-First Nations community members. I made a conscious decision at the outset of the research process that I would be looking to observe the quality of community life wherever I traveled. I was keenly interested in visiting East Coast communities to determine what if any benefits were derived from oil and gas resources, and how this has affected their way of life. Since many of the communities on the East Coast were largely dependent on the fish resource industry, much like our community, their experience could prove to be invaluable to our West Coast offshore oil and gas development. The following are observations I made on our trip to the East Coast that I think will be relevant if and when oil and gas development go ahead on our coast.

- Rural communities and probably urban areas did not believe that offshore oil and gas development was a reality.
- Federal and provincial bodies developed the offshore oil and gas accord behind closed doors.
- Oil and gas revenues appear to be shared on a sliding scale starting with the federal government, and getting smaller with each successive level of government and society: provincial, municipal, community members.
- East Coast First Nations were included in the accord process.
- Oil and gas exploration is very costly in terms of dollars – \$3 to \$5 billion per producing well.
- Seismic testing is very extensive when deposits of oil are located but there is very little information about the impacts on sea life.
- Exploratory drilling is very extensive: 350 to 400 exploratory wells to establish one producing well.
- Drilling on the ocean floor causes a buildup of drilling debris: about one metre deep and one kilometre diameter around the drill site.
- Oil and gas research and development linked to world demand takes priority over ocean environmental concerns.
- Feasibility of oil and gas development is determined by the global economy.
- The global economy drives oil and gas resource development, and it commands money away from rural communities.
- Oil and gas is shipped south to the US and world markets.
- There needs to be open communication with all involved with offshore oil and gas development in order to insure environmental issues are addressed and ocean ecosystems are protected.
- It is vitally important for communities to establish a data and information research and organization process that will relay relevant aquatic/marine information that will assist in raising community awareness.



OUR COMMUNITY HAS BECOME PAINFULLY AWARE OF THE DEPLETION OF RESOURCES IN OUR TERRITORY AND THAT WE WERE WILLING PARTICIPANTS IN THE FOREST AND FISH RESOURCE EXTRACTION. WE REALIZED OUR FOLLY TOO LATE.

- Initially, the benefit to the fishing industry was limited, until fishermen decided to become collaboratively involved with the offshore oil and gas development process.
- Fishermen must be open to developing a working relationship with the scientific community to gain a more thorough understanding of the impacts of offshore oil and gas in fishing areas.
- The fishing industry must be directly involved in setting standards that address ocean environmental issues, especially threats to or loss of ecosystems and species relevant to the fishing economy.
- When dealing with resource management issues and the establishment of exclusion zones protecting valuable marine resources, the “one ocean” approach must be considered.
- It is important for fishermen to develop an open and proactive relationship and open lines of communication with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans; the DFO is instrumental in setting marine/aquatic standards for offshore oil and gas.
- Communities within the Queen Charlotte Basin should establish a networking relationship that fosters a capacity building process to empower our community members to participate in the developmental or operational process of an offshore oil and gas economy.



- Communities within the Queen Charlotte Basin must promote open and trusting communication that promotes a common and unified voice.
- First Nations communities must exercise traditional territorial rights; we must determine where our starting point begins in the offshore oil and gas development process.
- First Nations communities must consider a referendum approach in the offshore oil and gas development process.
- Issues of governance, jurisdiction and public consultation are of vital importance when addressing licensing authority, environmental issues, safety and health procedures when establishing terms of reference for the offshore oil and gas accord.
- Community empowerment comes when we can utilize all offshore oil and gas related data, research, information and experiences from our sister communities on the East Coast.
- All reports, information shared at community sessions and recorded video information will be valuable to our communities.

During the last fifteen to twenty years, the forest and salmon economies began to decline, which affected the quality of our community lifestyle. During the boom years, most of our people stopped storing fish and wild meat for the winter months. As a result of the dwindling sockeye and spring salmon stocks, we now rely on lower quality pink and chum salmon for sustenance. Moose and deer have become scarce and only those fortunate enough to be able to travel afar enjoy these meats during the winter months. Our fears about our disappearing resources have resulted in many of our community members becoming involved with the research and development of other resources in and around our territory. Our community has become painfully aware of the depletion of resources in our territory and that we were willing participants in the forest and fish resource extraction. We realized our folly too late. Moreover, we admit our

effort benefited big business and those who had little or no regard for environmental concerns and a “profit at any cost” ethic. Nuxalk involvement resulted in a “zero sum outcome” for our Nuxalk way of life. We believe our ignorance, our lack of knowledge, and our dependence on others for our livelihood resulted in our lack of direct involvement in the management of both the fish and forest resource industries.

Our community experienced chaos and violence during the early 1990s over fishing and logging issues. Many wanted to continue depleting our resources while others wanted to preserve our remaining resources. By 1997 both industries were almost non-existent. This realization prompted an effort within our community to resolve issues that caused dissension within our community. We decided to initiate a healing



process that would assist us in taking control of our lives and our destiny. Little did we realize that our suffering, trauma and loss went back a hundred years without any letup. Our people have experienced wave after wave of trauma. Smallpox took nearly 30,000 souls and hundreds more were lost to influenza and tuberculosis. The loss of four successive generations of children to residential schools, where many experienced physical, mental, spiritual and sexual abuse, has resulted in a breakdown in family relations. Most of us were living a life where trust, forgiveness, unity and cooperation were non-existent; dysfunctional living had become a way of life for us. The loss of our traditional lands and resources, and our spiritual and cultural foundations resulted in a disconnection from our primary responsibility as stewards of our territory. We have acknowledged that the breakdown of our self-sufficient and balanced way of life has resulted in an impoverished and dependent lifestyle in which we are almost totally dependent on government handouts for our sustenance.

In 1997 our community decided to pull ourselves out of our dysfunctional way of life and reach out for assistance in designing a wellness and healing strategy. The Four Worlds International organization provided professional and technical guidance that helped set the foundation and framework for our personal and community healing and wellness process. This development process involved approximately one hundred and fifty Nuxalkmc from all walks of life, including youth, women, men, elders, service providers, band employees, political lead-

ers and representatives of various community boards, committees and organizations. This plan is in the fifth year of implementation. Two hundred and fifty Nuxalkmc have now committed to various forms of healing and personal growth and are ready to begin efforts toward building a sustainable economy.

We must strive to develop a sustainable relationship with our natural world: earth, forest, water, air, living things created by our creator. We realize that one of the most critical lines of action to pursue in order to bring long-term well-being and prosperity is that we must adhere to guiding principles that combine the following elements:

- The existence of spiritual and cultural values related to living in harmony with life.
- The development of human potential in areas such as healing, personal growth and learning.
- A sustainable relationship with the natural world – earth, forest, waters, air, living things – with a view that we must live in this world for generations to come.
- The development of enterprises capable both of generating wealth and operating in harmony with the above principles.

We understand that there needs to be a direct connection between the healing work and economic development. As we become healthier, we need to have meaningful work. A healthy person needs to be of use to others. Therefore, the creation of sustainable opportunities for people to do useful work – paid and unpaid – is very important to our community healing process. Building wealth has always been a part of our clan and chief system. However, it matters how wealth is produced and distributed. Our prosperity equation today has to be one of sustainability that is inclusive of the entire community; however, it must also have a solid business foundation based on today’s business principles. For these reasons, a balanced and sustainable development program has become an integral part of our healing and wellness strategy. The following are highlights of this plan.

- The Nuxalk Natural Resource Management Board will be legally constituted as a working body to plan for and oversee the use of Nuxalk lands and resources. A twenty-year or longer natural resource management plan will be developed.
- A ten-year community economic development plan will be prepared, the goal of which is full sustainable employment for Nuxalk people, including youth. This plan-making process will require extensive consultation with our community members as well as with various centres of excellence, such as UNBC, Simon Fraser, UBC, University of Victoria, Royal Roads University, etc. This consultation and learning process will assist us in gaining insight into the possibilities for successful enterprises, and will provide models for how to best structure the legal, financial and human resources development aspects. UNBC’s NCIRP project, “Community Collaborative Studies on British Columbia Offshore Oil and Gas”, is a good example of our willingness to participate in resource development.
- A comprehensive Nuxalk human resources development plan will be prepared to assess the training and institutional capacity building needs for sustainable prosperity, based on our ten-year community economic development plan.

Our healing and development strategy has identified the need to become actively involved with local and external initiatives that will contribute to our strategy. Networking within our central and northern communities in the Queen Charlotte Basin is a positive approach in building a sustainable economy. Our Nuxalk community is committed to establishing a sustainable approach by beginning with our readily available resources. Our development process begins from the bottom up, and is inclusive of all who reside within our territory.

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BUILDING WEALTH HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF OUR CLAN AND CHIEF SYSTEM. HOWEVER, IT MATTERS HOW WEALTH IS PRODUCED AND DISTRIBUTED. OUR PROSPERITY EQUATION TODAY HAS TO BE ONE OF SUSTAINABILITY THAT IS INCLUSIVE OF THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY.



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# JIM NYLAND

## OCEAN FALLS

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OCEAN FALLS HAD A POPULATION OF FOUR THOUSAND AND IT WAS CENTRAL TO THE REGIONAL DISTRICT. IT WAS THE CENTRE FOR HEALTH CARE, SCHOOLING, POLICING, ETCETERA. BUT WHEN THE MILL CLOSED, THE TOWN ESSENTIALLY CLOSED WITH IT.

OCEAN FALLS, JUST LIKE A LOT OF THE COMMUNITIES, IS A COMMUNITY IN TRANSITION. It's right in the heart of the central coast at the end of Cousins Inlet. It is, by definition, geographically isolated. It's climate is known to be quite inhospitable, with about 4000 millimetres – about 175 inches – of rainfall a year, the highest of any populated location in Canada. Basically nothing was there before 1906 except for seasonal fishing grounds used by the nearby Bella Bella natives. It was surveyed in the early part of the last century by European and American entrepreneurs looking for good sources of timber and power, and was eventually developed as a mill town.

The mill was pulp and paper. There were many saw logs sorted out there, but then they were transported, rafted down south to sawmills to be sold off. The mill in Ocean Falls just consumed pulp logs. It went through various names – first the Bella Coola Paper Company, then Pacific Mills, which had a fairly recognizable logo on the central coast, an old Indian head with the side profile. Crown Zellerbach picked it up in the 1950s and then closed it in 1972. Then the provincial government ran the mill as a Crown corporation from 1972 to 1980, when it was finally closed for good. When the operation was at its peak, Ocean Falls had a population of four thousand and it was central to the regional district. It was the centre for health care, schooling, policing, etcetera. But when the mill closed, the town essentially closed with it. The services went in every direction. Bella Coola assumed the seat of the regional district, the government agent left and went to Port Hardy, hospital services went over to Bella Bella, and there wasn't much left in town after that.

Access to this part of the coast is still by boat or float plane. There is no road to Ocean Falls. The geography is too rugged. Bella Coola got the road because it was at the end of a natural transportation route down a valley, but beyond that it was just impossible. It's the same reason why the surplus hydro generated out of Ocean Falls today can't be transmitted to Bella Coola with a transmission line, because it is just too cost prohibitive, even for the fifty miles that separates us. It's very isolated. The only feasible transmission line was one that goes twenty-five miles over to Bella Bella, which is the bread and butter of the that hydro facility today. It keeps about twelve guys employed. The hydro plant ran at full capacity when the mill was running. It has the potential of up to fourteen megawatts, but only puts out about three right now. So there's lots of surplus potential there, but nowhere to send it.

So the population sits at about 110 today. And about half of them are summer residents. A fair amount of Americans and Albertans have summer houses, the big attraction, of course, being the sport-fishing, and the peace and quiet and isolation. Having said that, we're not that far off the Inside Passage route from



Seattle to Alaska. The local marina is very busy in the summer months with recreational boats stopping by. The docks are always full. There aren't any cruise ships, but the BC Ferry stops in every weekend on its way between Prince Rupert and Port Hardy. Bella Bella and Ocean Falls are midway stops. In summer there's the Queen of Chilliwack, which is more of a recreational type ferry that takes vehicles, that travels between Bella Coola and Port Hardy. Bella Coola only has ferry service during the summer months because BC Ferries isn't obligated to run a service in there, because they do have road access in and out, whereas we don't on the outer coast. That's the difference. We don't have any road or railroad access, so it's either float plane or ferry. And that becomes an issue on a whole bunch of levels, whether it's bringing in your groceries or major freight. There is a corner store which does a fairly decent job of supplying bread and milk, fruit and vegetables when they can, at a slightly higher cost than downtown, but not unreasonable. We get by and most people are pretty self-sufficient and good about stocking up on their dry goods. Most people take a couple ferry trips out a year.

I came to Canada from England right after high school, in 1968. I originally went to Quebec and then Ontario. I got married in Ontario and took up work in mostly metal design and fabrication. I worked for Atomic Energy out there, and then Alcan came through with a recruiting drive in the mid 70s, and I joined them in 1976 in Kitimat. They hired me as a tradesman and I worked in the smelter for twenty years basically, first in the trade shops and working with the apprentices. I also spent a couple years with the union as the business agent, doing negotiations with the company. The way it worked was you stayed on as long as you could. You had friends who had stayed on, so you would stay on for another year, and then next thing you know it's twenty years later. But after twenty years there wasn't a big change, it's a company town, somewhat narrow in focus. But the main incentive for me to finally leave was that the kids got to an age where they were finished high school and out on their own and they weren't going to stay around. They were moving on to college. The choice was you either stay there to retire, or move on.

I chose to move, first to Prince Rupert, then I went back to Ireland for a year. While I was there my uncles and aunts and cousins were in small communities in the west of Ireland and there was some pretty progressive stuff going on there in terms of revitalization and sustainable development in communities that were otherwise in the doldrums. They were starting off some innovative small businesses based on community direction, and local control. I came back from that experience, and I just thought, there is so much

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WE DON'T HAVE ANY ROAD OR RAILROAD ACCESS, SO IT'S EITHER FLOAT PLANE OR FERRY. AND THAT BECOMES AN ISSUE ON A WHOLE BUNCH OF LEVELS, WHETHER IT'S BRINGING IN YOUR GROCERIES OR MAJOR FREIGHT. WE GET BY AND MOST PEOPLE ARE PRETTY SELF-SUFFICIENT.



WHILE THE RESIDENTS OF A COMPANY TOWN HAD LITTLE OR NO VOICE AT THE TIME THE DECISION WAS MADE TO CLOSE THE MILL, THAT VOICE HAS FOUND ITSELF WITHIN THOSE RESIDENTS WHO CHOSE TO STAY OR MOVED IN AFTERWARDS. THEY REALIZE THAT GOVERNMENT AT ANY LEVEL CANNOT ANSWER THE QUESTIONS OF THEIR FUTURE BETTER THAN THEY THEMSELVES. THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING SOME CONTROL OF THEIR LOCAL RESOURCES HAS BECOME APPARENT.

in common between what is going on there and the west coast of BC, and the sorts of attitudes towards those outlying areas from central government in the city. Anyway, I came back over here and settled in Victoria for a year, trying to figure out what the next step was, and a newspaper ad for a part time administrator for Oceans Falls just jumped out at me in the spring of 2000. I immediately thought, yep, that sounds like a plan and I faxed up a resume. They called me, and then I was pretty much on the next ferry. It was really just one of those shots in the dark, but it was a good fit. Some people would refer to the location as isolated, but after twenty years at Kitimat, I learned the trick was to get out once in a while. The central coast is just absolutely gorgeous. I have an appreciation for the west coast, for the salt water, the traditions. It just did not seem that foreign at all. You get the sense that this is where you belong.

During my time in Kitimat, there was a raging debate about Alcan's expansion plans and the Kemano Completion Project. Alcan proposed the project in the late 1970s. At the time, they were running a sizeable aluminum smelter operation in Kitimat that was powered by a major generating station in Kemano. The Kemano generating station derived its power from harnessing a series of lakes around what's known as the Nechako reservoir, whose watershed flowed into the Nechako River, and from there into the Fraser River at Prince George. Kenney Dam was the structure that was built where the waters would enter into the Nechako River. That dam in effect reversed the flow of the river from its natural course – from north and east, it was diverted to flow west and south towards Kemano through a ten-mile tunnel drilled through solid rock in the mountainside with a drop of 1800 feet. So it provided pretty tremendous headwaters for power and massive potential. That was built in the early 1950s, and now twenty-five years later Alcan started talking about extending hydro capacity for larger aluminum capacity in Kitimat. At least that was the plan as originally expressed. It turned out later on that they had definite plans for hydro expansion, and indefinite or very loose plans for the aluminum expansion. Some people think they never meant to increase their aluminum capacity, that they just saw the opportunity for pretty good revenues from selling the expanded hydro capacity.

Regardless of the motives, the plan was to basically drill a second tunnel through the mountain to double up the capacity at Kemano. And that resulted in a ten-year process of project definition, technical hearings, environmental hearings, provincial and federal hearings. Some community groups sprang up voicing concerns about it. It basically resulted in a coalition of community groups, native bands a whole mix of people, and eventually included the union at Kitimat who represented the employees, who had some real concerns about the real motive behind Alcan's expansion plans. There was a group of us that started questioning the whole idea. We said, wait a minute, this is an issue with more than meets the eye. At some risk of being perceived as anti-development in Kitimat, we went to Vanderhoof, Houston, Burns Lake, Smithers to find out what was happening there. There were a lot of question marks about whether there would be increased capacity and what it would mean to employment. There was also a shared concern for the environment and the effects on the region. A lot of the employees there were sport fisherman and they had concerns about what would happen to the watershed, rivers and lakes. There was a whole range of concerns. It was an evolving process and really matured the way of thinking for Kitimat residents to a point where, eventually, local politicians got on board and, after the project was terminated by the province, the Kitimat council sort of took up what we had started, challenging Alcan about loss of jobs and the demise of the economy and the lack of commitment by the company to the responsibilities in the original agreement it had signed in 1950. But that's another story I guess.

Anyway, I felt that, in terms of being involved in that process, that was a real personal development thing for me, and an insight into how outside control, both corporate and large government, works, and the

impacts on small communities from resource extraction without a say in who makes the decisions. All those bigger questions that are being talked about now – about local versus outside control, about the balance between the economy and the environment, the double-edged sword – they were all made real for me through that process. The town of Ocean Falls, as with other communities along the coast, saw its fortunes rise and fall on the strength of one resource, and the changes in technology and centralization of corporate capital in the latter part of the 20th century. While the residents of a company town had little or no voice at the time the decision was made to close the mill, that voice has found itself within those residents who chose to stay or moved in afterwards. They realize that government at any level cannot answer the questions of their future better than they themselves. The importance of having some control of their local resources has become apparent.

Now today you see things like, in logging for instance, these joint partnerships, at least in our part of the region, between native communities and traditional logging contractors, resource extraction where there is some viable and some visible benefit going back to the community. That's what I see as an exciting process. This is not black and white. There are shades of gray we are trying to define. I can see some of the direct benefits in our region from that resource. But on the other hand, when you see the increase of these recreational boaters coming up and down the coast and what they say about things like the cut blocks that are visible from the water – it's a matter of finding that balance. We went through the LRMP process on the central coast, and we incorporated some of the recommendations about scenic values of certain areas, like our area, where it was designated that a maximum seven percent of the cut should be visible. If we can manage to do things that way, we may be on our way to pleasing both sides. I don't know about the mechanics and how it all works. I just know the community point of view. I know that, in Bella Coola, they've gone from absolute opposition to logging to seeking a community forest license now. So I guess what that says is cutting is okay as long as you consider who controls it and how it is done. It's not rocket science. The Heiltsuk in Bella Bella and the Nuxalk in Bella Coola have both been active proponents of sustainable resource development on the coast. Then you come to Ocean Falls, a non-native community midway between Bella Bella and Bella Coola, and we're in a position where, for the sake of a positive future, we have embraced the opportunity to work with them for a mutual benefit.



There's another really positive example of regional cooperation going on today on the central coast and that's this broadband initiative assisted by Industry Canada to try and get broadband internet into isolated rural areas. Here we had six communities, all the way from Klemtu and Shearwater to Bella Coola and Bella Bella put together a joint business plan that was accepted by Industry Canada. It was a \$2.2 million matching grant proposal, so it meant the region raising \$1.1 million, but it is happening. Right now there are surveyors and engineers on top of mountains in Oceans Falls, Bella Coola, Bella Bella, Klemtu, pouring concrete for the towers, and it's coming together. Another thing is that it will be a local service, so the server for Oceans Falls, Bella Bella and Bella Coola will basically be a local society.

I think I downplay the direct impact gas and oil will have on Ocean Falls because of various things, mainly geography, because of our distance way off to the other side of the coast. The only way it would directly involve us would be if they perceive a need for something involving surplus hydro power. If there was a



need, a fit, that would be our only connection that I would see. Other than that I see it as having basically very indirect impacts, because we are off the beaten track. I agree with those who have conjectured that Prince Rupert and Port Hardy are the places that will see the gain, and even they will have a difficult time trying to keep major engineering stuff away from Vancouver, and even overseas from what I hear. So what happens to sport fishing – migrating salmon on their way to the Charlotte Basin, on the way back to the Martin River, Ocean Falls to Bella Coola, the spring salmon run, all the recreational fishing places we go to – what happens to them? But I do see a potential real benefit in terms of what we learned on the East Coast about these joint ventures between fishing people and oil people. So there's a role there, a definite interest in participating in establishing guidelines and monitoring enforcement measures. The community, meanwhile, given its boom and bust history, is concentrating on the development of current realistic economic opportunities rather than waiting for the next great saviour of jobs and revenue over which we may have little or no control. Regarding revenue sharing, the message was loud and clear from small communities in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland that it's not enough for the feds and the province to get an agreement signed with the oil companies if that money never makes it back to the regions and the communities directly.

My initial expectation on joining the NCIRP process at the invitation of UNBC was nothing more than we'd be collecting some raw technical data to decide the appropriateness of oil and gas on the west coast. So I was surprised to find out – especially when it came to the east coast visit – that the agenda and the actual meetings allowed for this community-to-community interaction, and hearing the negative and the positive. That really impressed me and convinced me to serve as much as possible to the process. To me, the Community Guidance Group has definitely created a new network, although not a new mechanism or a revolutionary process. There are other models all around on those types of issues like community networking. At this point, the question is, Do we let it wither? That's the thing with coalitions. I am still of two minds. The older school of thought says let's move on, which I think is probably a little too clinical. Not that we're going to keep it going because we're on a crusade; that would be setting ourselves up for a fall in my opinion. Somewhere in between I think is the answer: a loose coalition, a network setup that we can build on.

I am personally disappointed there wasn't a higher profile result out of that project set up by Jacky Booth. It seemed to me it was an opportunity lost. That was the one with a mandate to go out to the area to talk to people, and to analyze or give some feedback on how best the communications mechanism could happen, or at least that was my understanding of it. It may not be UNBC's fault – I don't know what was spent on that or what the idea was, but there should have been something there that assisted the community guidance people more than what it did. I think if it was done with more involvement, then there might have been less waffling by community guidance people midway through the process. But other than that, it's given a chance to get into some real long-term planning about how to be included in the process if and when the green light is given on lifting the moratorium.

The question of lifting the moratorium on offshore oil and gas exploration and development is a provincial issue, not just a coastal issue or a northern issue. I think it is in the interest of all British Columbians to at least be informed about what's going on. And that means input from the people who are directly affected needs to be taken into consideration. I think there is some quid pro quo there. Just because oil and gas is happening in northeastern BC and seems removed from people's everyday life, for example, it doesn't mean somebody in Abbotsford or Port Moody doesn't need to take an interest with what is happening with the market, with oil and gas prices, with ownership issues. I mean, what's driving their cars? It's the same with forestry. It's a provincial issue and logging seems to be something that's done "out there." But for all the communities, from where the trees are cut down to the furniture factory in the Fraser Valley where the chairs are made, there's a tie-in there and I don't think it is appreciated. enough.

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THE MESSAGE WAS LOUD AND CLEAR FROM SMALL COMMUNITIES IN NOVA SCOTIA AND NEWFOUNDLAND THAT IT'S NOT ENOUGH FOR THE FEDS AND THE PROVINCE TO GET AN AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH THE OIL COMPANIES IF THAT MONEY NEVER MAKES IT BACK TO THE REGIONS AND THE COMMUNITIES DIRECTLY.



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# DIANE HEWLETT

KITIMAT

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KITIMAT IS A UNIQUE COMMUNITY BECAUSE IT WAS DESIGNED BY INDUSTRY AND FOR INDUSTRY WITH THE CATALYST BEING THE SIGNING OF A CONTRACT BETWEEN ALCAN AND THE BC GOVERNMENT FOR A WATER LICENSE FOR A POWER-INTENSIVE INDUSTRIAL PURPOSE.

I LIVE IN KITIMAT AND WORK FOR THE DISTRICT OF KITIMAT. IT IS A UNIQUE COMMUNITY because it was designed by industry and for industry with the catalyst being the signing of a contract between Alcan and the BC government for a water license for a power-intensive industrial purpose. When I say the community was designed by and for industry, it's important to note there are some unique features and a timelessness about the design. The community is set back from tidewater eleven kilometres, which is unique for a coastal community. Kitimat Valley is the second of only two wide, flat valleys on the entire coast of BC and the large natural deep sea port was a requirement. Alcan needed a location for a large aluminum smelter. Those timeless, strategic advantages continue here today.

We've been impacted by global consolidations and global policies like buyer/supplier rationalizations and outsourcing, and the total focus on maximizing shareholder value. Economic impacts from globalization are felt locally and regionally. Kitimat doesn't have an extravagant budget for economic development, so our municipal department focuses on providing development information and investor services. It is not a typical community socio-economic development role – it's a role where the focus is on where strategic merits attract investment. There are some unique industrial projects on the horizon – some we feel will build on what is here – an example being new gas feedstock for the tidewater petrochemical manufacturer that is located here.

Most proponents of the oil and gas industry who are looking at the north coast will look at Prince Rupert and Kitimat. There are two liquid natural gas (LNG) projects proposed for the north coast right now and two oil pipeline projects. All have to make their decisions based on environmental and economic analysis, and our understanding is that of the oil pipeline projects is close to the end of the studies, with a location decision to be announced soon. One LNG project has already picked Kitimat, largely because of the strategic advantages here that directly relate to their type of project. The second LNG project looked at Kitimat and Prince Rupert and, based on their project involving barging LNG rather than using a pipeline, it was more advantageous for them to be on the outer reaches of the water. We're very pleased when any activity happens, even if it goes to Prince Rupert. We like to think that decisions are based on analysis of real business facts, without political influence. Everyone wins if business decisions are made for sustainable business reasons. So it makes sense for them to be in Prince Rupert and we wish them well. The development of the Kitimat LNG project as new industry to Kitimat is incredibly important because it will provide the basis for additional development here. Our population is down over the past decade because of globalization, industrial decline and the impact from BC's poor economic reputation. But our strengths lie also in what we've become – for a community this size, if you add up all the people directly employed, along

with the companies here servicing industry, close to seventy percent of the people who live here are tied to the industrial economy, with high incomes. I would suggest every community in northern BC has faced incredible challenges over the last decade. We have seen some trends, including major consolidations of companies to reposition themselves in the global economy. There are pluses and minuses to that, and with Alcan choosing not to be at full manufacturing output, the workforce has declined. Everything about Kitimat's economy has been and is global. We often have people from the region visit that don't necessarily understand this is the parameter of this economy. Often politically there is an expectation that communities can work together regionally. I think there are some things you can work on together, but every community needs to look at and do what makes sense for that community. Strategic advantages need to be defined and understood on a community level, and the total regional economy is formed from that.

From our perspective, and my personal experience, development of any natural resource has to be done with full accountability and responsibility. This means thorough studies of the environment as well as consideration of the sustainability of the resource if that applies. That doesn't mean we're afraid of industrial development. Perhaps it's a little easier for Kitimat people to envision the benefits of a new industry, because we've been through it and have experienced the processes that help lead to trust. Others haven't had this experience. It's likely foolhardy in our day and age, with the amount of information we have, to stay lost in fear. There are assumptions that we should all diversify the same way. We may think we know



about other communities but we really don't. For example most don't know of the connectivity and the computer skills and the internet use here – it's astounding. Over seventy percent of businesses and homes in Kitimat have at least one internet connection. In the early 1990s fibre optics were put in place in the Alcan plant, long before most other northern manufacturing operations, and then around 1994/95, Alcan made available the first internet service for the community. Since then, high speed has come in and use has blossomed. That is a huge benefit for our community. We are so plugged in, and that gives us a whole new view of the world. The virtual world enables knowledge gains and has been very enlightening to rural communities.

There have been downsides to the internet availability. It has and will impact consumer behavior, and the change in consumer behavior has affected every community. I don't think anybody in any rural area can fully appreciate how far reaching that is. I really don't think there is enough research on consumer behav-

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PERHAPS IT'S A LITTLE EASIER FOR KITIMAT PEOPLE TO ENVISION THE BENEFITS OF A NEW INDUSTRY, BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN THROUGH IT AND HAVE EXPERIENCED THE PROCESSES THAT HELP LEAD TO TRUST. OTHERS HAVEN'T HAD THIS EXPERIENCE.

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IF THERE IS OIL AND GAS IN THIS REGION, DEVELOPING THAT RESOURCE AND PROVIDING THAT RESOURCE TO THE GLOBAL MANUFACTURERS HERE SEEMS LOGICAL. HAVING LOCAL RESOURCES STIMULATE ACTIVITY TOWARD CRITICAL MASS MAKES GOOD ECONOMIC SENSE.



ior in rural areas. The big box retailers have also had an affect on our community. In Kitimat, there have been four major shifts since when the road went in to Terrace. Before the highway, you could only leave by rail. But as soon as the highway came in, and more families became two-car families, we saw more cars on the road, and more people leaving Kitimat to shop elsewhere. There are those who remember Kitimat being the place to shop when Alcan was starting its operations here. We had a large Hudson's Bay here for many years – an equivalent to today's big-box retail – but when the company decided to get out of small town Canada, they left Kitimat as well. That was a very common decision among retailers across Canada, not just in Kitimat. Terrace, with all its strategic advantages, then came to be viewed as a geographic hub and the regional location for critical mass of government and consumers. I would say it's been a natural evolution. The road to the outside was first, the two-car family was second, internet shopping third (along with specialty catalogues and the Shopping Channel on TV) and, almost concurrent with the internet, the development of big box stores in Terrace was the final step. You walk through our mall now and so many stores have closed. It's a sign of the times. There have been population losses across the north and stores closed in every town. Consumer shopping patterns likely won't change even if there is new industrial development – including mining, or a resurgence of value-added production in forestry, or offshore oil and gas. There will be impacts on communities, as well as opportunities, but our world has gotten smaller and more easily accessible through our communications and transportation technologies. Retail in small towns need to be unique and use 'multi-channel' strategies – they can no longer rely on the customer walking in the door for their sales. They need to sell through every channel available to them – including internet, catalogues and close alignment to interest groups that buy their products.

No one has a crystal ball. We know industry is attracted to us because we are industrial by nature. We know there are synergies here for an energy hub, and we know that if there is an existing oil terminal, if there is an existing LNG terminal, and a pipeline that's taking gas to the North American marketplace and bringing oil from inland, those are pretty compelling reasons to look at Kitimat as an energy hub. It would make sense. The skill and knowledge are in place here and the fact that we have the Kitimat Valley Industrial Institute (KVI), an accredited industrial education facility in a number of areas including power engineering, emergency services training and even paper-making, is also an asset. KVI is now aligned with the Petroleum Institute for Training Services (PITS) of Alberta which is an industry operated organization that delivers oil and gas training services for the region, so Kitimat is already prepared to start training people to work in the onshore Bowser Basin. KVI was already offering the base courses so it made sense for PITS to recognize their proven expertise. Up to 1996 or 1997, it seemed the province wasn't doing anything to further oil and gas development in this area. The Geological Survey of Canada had been conducting studies on the 65,000 square kilometre Bowser Basin. But from our perspective, it wasn't until Kitimat started asking questions as to why the Bowser wasn't considered for oil and gas development that it seemed like things started moving. It's great to have a strong energy-related economy in the northeast, but when we have Methanex, the largest single user of natural gas in the province, right here in this

region, and the gas has to come from northeastern BC, the cost of operations mounts. If there is oil and gas in this region, developing that resource and providing that resource to the global manufacturers here seems logical. Having local resources stimulate activity toward critical mass makes good economic sense.

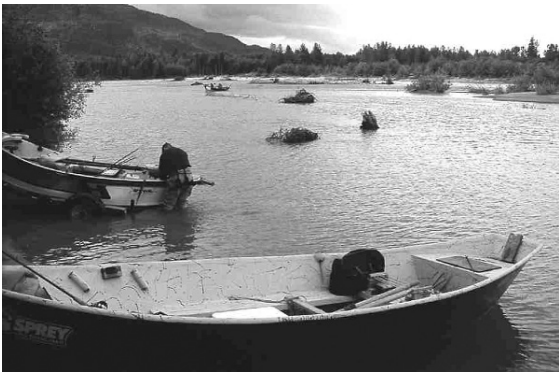
People come to Kitimat expecting to see smokestacks and an incredibly industrial town. Most are surprised to find that it's not like that at all. We describe ourselves as a marvel of nature and industry – because we are that. The things that keep people living in a northern community, for the most part, will be lifestyle-related – how they interact with nature. Our mobility rates have always been very low, because people really enjoy what they're doing here, as well as their environment and all the various types of outdoor pursuit activities available. Lifestyle makes the difference. Irregardless of industry, the attraction here is a balance and we will insist that balance remains.

We recently had the first Kitimat LNG open house – an event held just prior to the company starting their environmental approval process. The company wanted to hear from members of the community. They requested everyone pre-register – which in small towns is unusual. But people were interested, and more than 100 people registered and then about 120 showed up at the meeting. The proponent not only did the typical ten-minute PowerPoint project overview presentation; they also brought the province in to discuss the environmental approval process to help create an understanding in people's minds about the process the project will undertake before development. This leads to an informed public. Education helps modify fearmongering born of lack of knowledge. The company spokespeople were very frank, explaining facts and process. Later there were breakout groups so everyone had the opportunity to speak and ask questions in a more comfortable small group setting. They asked about our concerns and what values in terms of lifestyle activities people thought might be threatened by an LNG plant at Emsley Cove. There were those who had concerns about whether fish habitat would be affected – whether they would be able to continue fishing, whether certain good halibut spots may be affected, or if their crab locations would be impacted. Others wanted to know if the company would build a boat ramp or offer public access to the water like a beach park similar to Alcan Beach – because if you're a kayaker, and you can get access to the water sixteen kilometres down channel, a whole new world opens. So access to the ocean, sustaining natural resources – those are clearly things that are important to people. Some of the businesses wanted to know about construction, and how they could express themselves and position themselves better to take advantage of new industry and opportunities.



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WE DESCRIBE OURSELVES AS A MARVEL OF NATURE AND INDUSTRY. PEOPLE REALLY ENJOY WHAT THEY'RE DOING HERE, AS WELL AS THEIR ENVIRONMENT AND ALL THE VARIOUS TYPES OF OUTDOOR PURSUIT ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE. LIFESTYLE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE. IRREGARDLESS OF INDUSTRY, THE ATTRACTION HERE IS A BALANCE AND WE WILL INSIST THAT BALANCE REMAINS.



The number of jobs which could result from new industry, although small in number, is a no-brainer – meaning new jobs are new jobs. But there are also spin-offs and some unemployed people here that already have various skill sets could take advantage of new opportunities. We know the industry is heavily automated, with computer control centres similar to what exists in our other industries. One of the reasons KVI has been so successful is they have provided power engineering certification programs to this community for ten years – first as the Skills Centre and now as KVI. We have a large number of people employed in industry in this town, and so we're able to offer a fully accredited hands-on power engineering program right here – the only other place you can go in BC to get power engineers is at BCIT. KVI has power plant generation

capability right in the school. There are some great success stories coming out of this and other industrial training programs, with some people coming off welfare and now working full-time in industry. There are local opportunities for kids in northern communities for industrial training – check it out. If a young person isn't academically inclined and not sure of what they want to do, they drift. Sometimes they drift on mom and dad's couch for years. So having a facility like KVI focusing on industrial training, or paper making, or oil and gas training, or emergency and industrial services training provides those individuals with a local opportunity. It's part of the whole concept of meeting life-long learning and regional and community education needs. KVI also runs an MBA program from Simon Fraser University with close to thirty students. They've added an SFU undergraduate, three-year business program, with twenty-six students currently enrolled. The instructors come here to lecture in our classrooms – it's not virtual learning like people expect. It is possible to have meaningful educational experiences in our community. Simon Fraser University, to their credit, made it work in the manner that made sense for us – not the other way around.

Development also evolves from opportunity. For example, when Alcan decided to shut down the town of Kemano, there was the big question of what to do with all the infrastructure. In the end the decision was made to sell as much infrastructure as possible with efforts to make sure much of that infrastructure was placed within the region. For example, the daycare from Kemano went to the Kitimaat Village and is still used today as a daycare. Then, a major North American research and development project which ran over two seasons was put into place to remove the remaining Kemano infrastructure. The National Research Council was involved, emergency service personnel, firefighters, even the FBI were part of the training and testing done through staged, controlled burning of the remaining community infrastructure. Out of that, came the idea that a northern emergency and industrial training academy would serve northern needs. Given the experience Kitimat had, the Northern Emergency Services Training Academy evolved. They are now working on full accreditation through the Justice Institute. Each of the industries here has the full complement of emergency response staff and equipment, so it provides them the opportunity to ensure their skills are at a world-class level and it opens the doors to partnerships like KVI now has with PITS.

The types of training done here routinely serve as a step into industry. The four basic classes you need to work in oil and gas sector are all offered here in Kitimat at KVI, based on PITS standards and acknowledgement. It might seem unusual that people would come from Prince George to Kitimat to take training in industrial areas, but the fact is there's critical mass here, so why reinvent the wheel to put it in a college system, or in what's perceived as a "central location" for instance? Central to all rural regions? Not always. Building duplication in college systems for the same type of industrial training that is here would be a waste of public money. Many people in the north are not comfortable sending their kids to a big city like

Vancouver for an education and prefer a small town like Kitimat. We're a safe town, it's easy to get around without a car using our BC transit system. Every street in town is serviced. Real estate and rentals, including apartments, are dirt-cheap. There are compelling reasons why people want to get their training here, where it's hands-on and there is a very real commitment to the individual.

The greatest benefit I saw from the UNBC process was that a lot of information was shared, not necessarily about the oil and gas development projects themselves, although there was a bit of that. We learned from the perspective that a new area of the economy might unfold. It was significant to talk and learn from people about what their region experienced. It was unfortunate that it happened at the beginning of the process because I think a lot of what people saw and heard was hard to retain. I thought the Citizens' Guide to the Royal Society Report was brilliant. I would like to know what the impact has been, and if it has met its mark. In the second project [A Review of the State of Knowledge of Marine and Shoreline Areas in the Queen Charlotte Basin] there are gaps. And there are gaps for reasons other than just not talking to enough people. A part of that is due to people not being comfortable in speaking, and some of that is fear. For example, Native cultures have been hurt by talking and sharing. Sharing is not taking. Education and training needs assessments need to be performed again, because those done in the past reflect a particular perspective and should be viewed as such. Material that exists but was not identified should be re-addressed and expanded into what we have. My worry is that four years from now, if there is a real push for oil and gas, how do we prepare ourselves as a community? We need to be sure the studies conducted will stand the test of time and presently there are gaps. I was surprised and pleased when I looked at some of the educational material from the Canadian Energy Centre. If you look at the partners that were involved, if you look at what processes they've followed for the development of their educational tools, it's been collaborative and balanced. Why, in BC with our education study, didn't we include this? Was it an attitude that, if it works in Alberta, it's not going to work here? Were we afraid to trust? I think that's a mistake. And there are other centres in the world we should have looked at, including in the United Kingdom. Why would we reinvent the wheel?

Perhaps an ongoing role for UNBC may be keeping track of all the projects going on, along with recording Traditional Ecological Knowledge – peoples' knowledge about their past and intersection with the land and sea that are vital to them, as well as recording knowledge of the industry and how it may impact us. I know Barry Pages went to Louisiana; chatting with him – he said it was amazing. He wasn't expecting to see what he saw – no massive devastation to the environment. The platforms were in fact fish habitat. I know there were some coastal community members who went to Alaska, and chatting with them – the sense was that this trip, too, was an eye-opener. I think back to the whirlwind trip we had to Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. There were twenty-four presentations in six days. We learned a lot, but also forgot a lot. It would have been interesting for them to send us the tapes from the trip, so we could really take it all in.

With oil and gas, as with any new economic activity, we need to learn about it and get the facts. I think we need to be smart enough in today's world, which is pretty complicated, to make decisions based on actual truth – which is an individual ethical responsibility. Each person has a place and a voice in the process, and unless you step forward, you will not learn and your concerns will not be heard. From a policy perspective I would hope level heads prevail if and when this province and the federal government and coastal communities move forward. We need to do what we can to make people knowledgeable and comfortable with the seismic testing. We don't know whether there are viable commercial resources in the Queen Charlotte Basin. If there are, then the whole process goes forward along with the full gamut of environmental studies, appropriate regulatory conditions, and discussions on revenue sharing to those that bear the brunt of the risk. All of that must happen before we can move forward.

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WITH OIL AND GAS, AS WITH ANY NEW ECONOMIC ACTIVITY, WE NEED TO LEARN ABOUT IT AND GET THE FACTS. I THINK WE NEED TO BE SMART ENOUGH IN TODAY'S WORLD, WHICH IS PRETTY COMPLICATED, TO MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON ACTUAL TRUTH. FROM A POLICY PERSPECTIVE I WOULD HOPE LEVEL HEADS PREVAIL IF AND WHEN THIS PROVINCE AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND COASTAL COMMUNITIES MOVE FORWARD.

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# SHANE DEINSTADT

PRINCE RUPERT

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RUPERT HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE CITY THAT COULD HAVE AND WOULD HAVE BUT NEVER HAS. GOING BACK TO ITS FOUNDING DAYS AROUND 1906, WHEN CHARLES HAYS WAS BUILDING THE RAILWAY ACROSS CANADA AND HE DETERMINED PRINCE RUPERT WOULD BE THE END OF THE LINE, THIS CITY WAS LAID OUT AND PLANNED TO BE A CITY OF ABOUT 80,000 PEOPLE. BUT THEN HE DIED ON THE TITANIC. THE CITY'S HISTORY EVER SINCE THEN HAS BEEN PEAKS AND VALLEYS.

**M**Y NAME IS SHANE DEINSTADT AND I AM A RESIDENT OF PRINCE RUPERT. I was born and raised here and my background is in the marine industry. I worked as commercial fisherman for sixteen years, I worked for Fisheries and Oceans for several years and now I'm in the marine towing, survey and consulting business. I guess you could say I have saltwater in my blood.

Rupert has always been the city that could have and would have but never has. Going back to its founding days around 1906, when Charles Hays was building the railway across Canada and he determined Prince Rupert would be the end of the line, this city was laid out and planned to be a city of about 80,000 people. He went back to England to get the money to do this, but then died on the Titanic. The city's history ever since then has been peaks and valleys and it's never really achieved what had been hoped for here. It's a boom and bust thing. Rupert always had three main resources: the pulp mill, fishing and logging. We've survived over the years because if one industry was down, the other two carried us through. But that changed in the '90s because they all went down at the same time. So that was a real culture and economic shock that was felt across the northwest. We just saw the pulp mill shut down again, and that's 600 jobs. But it doesn't just affect Rupert, it affects the whole region.

When I was a child, traveling from Prince Rupert to Terrace was a full day's drive. We used to judge that if we were half way to Lakesle Lake by noon, and had no more than one flat tire, we were having a good trip. So consequently all the freight went out by rail – fish on rail to Chicago – and all our freight came in on barge. Over the years the roads got better and then trucking started taking over. So Prince Rupert went from being at the beginning of the line, to being at the end of the line, and it has become, transportation-wise, the end user. So there have been job losses from that whole changing transportation sector. And some people haven't adjusted to that reality.

I have always been fortunate to make my living off the resources, the land has always been my bread and butter, and I think I am probably an optimistic realist. There are a number of issues going on right now besides oil and gas, and in some cases I don't have enough information to form an opinion. Like on the fish farm issue – I don't fish anymore – I think there are problems with the way they are doing it, but I don't know enough to say yes or no on it. And I'm that way with most issues. If it's something new, if it's never been done before, I can accept the argument that it needs to be studied. What I have a difficult time handling, in this case with oil and gas, is when people come up to me and say the Hecate Strait is the most dangerous environment to consider drilling in. And these are people with no marine experience. I have a problem with that, because you could get arguments from people on the North Sea that there is nowhere

else more dangerous and they're drilling there. There are places in the world where there are oil rigs and fish farms operating right next to each other without problems. I came in through the gulf of Mexico on a cruise ship recently, and one of the biggest attractions was outside of Galveston, where you're eighty miles offshore and it's like a city out there – oil rigs lit up, water pristine, and here are people working. The same thing was found on the east coast of Canada. One of the side jobs that benefited from the oil and gas industry was tourism. So I think things can co-exist.

One thing that seems true across the north is that everything is black and white – there is no grey. We're very opinionated which I think you'll find in other places around the Queen Charlotte Basin as well – it might be the fresh air we inhale all the time! Prince Rupert is a place with very strong labour ties, and one of the things in this whole process I could never figure out – and I talked to the labour council about it – I



don't understand why you, as a labour council, come out against it. There are jobs, good paying jobs. So why wouldn't you say you're in agreement, subject to certain conditions. But Rupert has always had a very strong union mentality and followed the party lines, so if the NDP comes out and says no, they go along with it. It's frustrating.

It is also a hot political issue. If there is ever oil and gas development, Rupert is going to benefit immensely, simply because of our rail, port and airline. Port Hardy and Kitimat could benefit too. All in all, if there is a community to benefit, it will be Kitimat and Rupert, because of geographic location. But I remember having a discussion with [former NDP MLA] Dan Miller, and in those days there was no way. So that's the underlying current, and I just can't seem to get past that hurdle. I don't have a problem with staged processes. We tried this before, our own little local group – about twelve of us – got together and said the economy is in the tank and we need to look at options. When we went to council for some money, we told them we can't sit on the sidelines and expect to be part of any benefit. You have to ante up. We have discussed the issue with opponents of oil and gas, we've said why don't we go together and get the provincial government to do the seismic work? There might not be anything viable out there, but they don't even want to do the tests, because some think, oh no, seismic testing kills fish.

When I was asked to sit on the Community Guidance Group, I went in blind. I was actually the only one at the first meeting here, before the Port Hardy meeting. Others came on later. My understanding was the process was to have local input and that the scientists would make sure our questions and concerns would be answered. And I understood we were going to be in a position to approve projects. Certainly there was an open discussion but there was really nothing new on the table. Everyone knew what everyone's position was. I went into this with an open mind, and with this group we all agreed to leave our hats at the door, and for the most part I think we were pretty successful. When they did the trip to the East Coast, there were a lot of people from the CGG that couldn't go, so others were brought in, which was fine

because they represented the Basin. But then they enlarged the CGG to include those people that weren't originally on it but went on the East Coast trip, and I think it kind of watered it down too much. Six members goes to twelve and nothing happens. I found that it wasn't quite as focused, and hats weren't always left at the door anymore. Given the complexity of the issue and our very limited knowledge, I think they group did fairly well, though. In hindsight, I would have preferred it if the CGG had been in place first, so that we could say, "These are the projects you should do, and these are the people you should talk to." But a couple of those projects were well out of the barn before we got involved.

From a northern perspective I am glad UNBC got the job. However the downside to them getting the job is that they don't have a marine department. So you might have been better getting someone from SFU or UVic, with a marine department. But then you're dealing with southern issues. It is a whole different battle in the north. And one thing that became clear is that these communities here will not tolerate this issue being hijacked by southern influences. I think that there were some administration problems when the process started, which you expect because it's all new. I think they tried to do the right things, and again they were under a lot of pressure with these timelines. You have to start somewhere and UNBC is only ten years old. It's a northern entity, which was the first thing it had going for it. If you had brought someone from UVic, I don't think you would have had so much openness because there is this distrust. Having said that I think UNBC might have been better served bringing someone in on contract that can streamline, because there was a lot of hurry up and rush and a lot of pressure from the province to meet deadlines and the money was running out. Was money spent wisely? I think history will tell.

The scientific panel, they are the people who really picked the projects. These guys were here to bring scientific credence to the studies. I think the process was okay in the sense of what we had to work with, but the fact was I read some of those reports four times and went cross-eyed and still didn't understand. So I think my fear is that there has been some work done, and now the next step is that information needs to be broken down and put in a practical form. I hope that gets done. I think there needs to be follow up. But

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I LIVE HERE. I AM NOT HERE TO MAKE A BUCK ON OIL AND GAS, BUT AS A RESIDENT OF THE NORTH I BELIEVE OIL AND GAS CAN BE SAFELY RECOVERED AND I THINK THE RISKS ARE FAR OUTWEIGHED BY THE BENEFITS IF DONE RIGHT



the other part of me says there was always an underlying current, within the first few months, from Victoria that there was not a lot of faith in the way UNBC was operating. I think a lot of this stuff will sit and collect dust. My fear now is that, with the results of the Priddle Panel – saying seventy-five percent of British Columbians are opposed – and the minority federal government – that all kind of took the wind out of the momentum to lift the moratorium. Realistically I don't think we'll get any kind of decision out of the federal government, for or against, until they have a majority government. I think you will see these reports go on a shelf because of that. This has happened before. In the '80s there was similar work done by another group, and we asked that some of that information be hauled out because I thought we might be duplicating it, – that's what happens with a lot of reports. Its unfortunate. I think the one thing that did come out of it is we proved to residents around the Basin that at least we have enough civility to discuss and to present our views with no hard feelings.

On the oil and gas issue I personally think these people that come in and say you can't do it – and they bring up the Exxon Valdez, saying there was too much oil spilled – I think of it like this: if our forefathers hadn't taken the risk, where would we be as humans. I think risk can be minimized. Being the last in North America to develop offshore, I think the lessons are there to be learned. For example, in the Gulf of Mexico I talked to a shrimp fisherman in Galveston in the midst of all these cruise ships and oil tankers. So I asked him how the fishing was and he said not very good. And I asked him if that was because of the industry. He said the mistake they made was they didn't make them bury the pipeline. He said they can't throw their nets in those areas because of the pipelines. In Europe everything has to be buried. If you take those precautions, fisherman can fish and they can drill. I saw the same thing in Nova Scotia. So you can do these things. Will there be accidents? Yes, there is always that risk. But consider this: if you look at the history of something like the Exxon Valdez spill, you will find that areas that were left alone, they came back, whereas the areas where they tried to clean up were a mess because they didn't know what they were doing. They just cooked the ground, drove oil deeper and killed all the biomass. Mother nature came and cleaned the other areas. The last big spill on the east coast – all you saw was this massive oil slick, but they didn't tell you it was mostly mud and lubricants. That was front page news. I would bet that if you asked anyone six months later how much wildlife was damaged by that, you'd find there would be less than a hundred birds. But we are very sensitive people and we feel sorry. Those things happen. That's life. And then you have the natural seepages that put more oil into the ocean than any Valdez.

I live here. I am not here to make a buck on oil and gas, but as a resident of the north I believe oil and gas can be safely recovered and I think the risks are far outweighed by the benefits if done right. I think we have the opportunities, the market will bring the oil companies and they will negotiate a deal you wouldn't have seen anywhere else. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. We have the potential here. Alberta is the best example. The Heritage Fund in Alberta provides for a percentage of royalties to go to a provincial legacy fund owned by people of Alberta. Alaska has a similar thing. Every year they get a royalty cheque, and it has been as high as \$5,000 US for every man, woman and child. These are direct benefits. People say there are no benefits to oil and gas. But it's not doing us any good in the ground. We have the technology. Some people will get jobs, buy houses, spin-off effects we don't have now will happen. My point is, whether its 300 or 3,000 jobs, it's better than what we have now. We live the pain of the economic times, our house prices drop and taxes go up. I can understand if you live in Vancouver why you would want to keep this place pristine, but you tell me – if we make this whole north a park, with no industrial development, how do we survive? Do we all pack up and move to Vancouver and get \$8 an hour? Or do you want that park so bad you'll give us our per capita income and we can get paid every year to live in a park?

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There has to be a compromise. I think this country is big enough that we can have both. I think we can have the pristine park and we can have industry. When I grew up in the '60s the logging practices were atrocious. You go up places logged in '60s, and that environmentalists were screaming about in the '70s, and you'd be hard-pressed to find one of those areas now, because they will grow back. We live in a great land and if we give it half a break, it will come back.

I think we have to explore fossil fuel alternatives, but the technology is not in place yet for alternative energy. Studies have been done that show it's going to be fifty years plus in development before you can replace fossil fuels. Wind power won't replace it all. It might replace power, but what are you going to use for manufacturing products like plastic for instance? I don't doubt that at some point we are going to run out of something. But you look back at the '60s and '70s and there was this fear we were going to run out of gas. Now they're drilling offshore, going down five or six thousand metres. We can't live with blinders on; there does need to be a combination of things. But what we have right now that sustains our lifestyle is fossil fuel. It meets our needs, and we're set up for it. We need to try and do things smarter and wiser, but in the short term we're going to be dealing with fossil fuels. If you don't agree with fossil fuels, then we have to decide as a society if we're ready to lower our standards of living and suffer the consequences. That's not realistic. Most people are not going to give up the air conditioning or their cars. I think we just keep going in this every-widening circle. And I think other technologies will come online, which may lead us to be less reliant on fossil fuels. But for the foreseeable future, fossil fuels are what we've got.

From the Basin perspective, will oil and gas exploration change the beauty of what we live in? I don't think it will change it noticeably for most people. When the provincial government developed Tatsensheni Park I thought, that is a beautiful place. A mine was shut down but I thought that was good for the environment. And then about three years later I read a follow-up report that said only about 650 people had gone through that park in those three years. The mine that was shut down was going to occupy less than one per cent of the park and it was going to employ 600 people. I like nature as much as the next guy, but nobody gets a free lunch. At some point you have to pay for everything you get. You have to have a job to make money to maintain your lifestyle. You can't do that in a park. Maybe if there was ecotourism and they were running say three or four thousand people a year through there, that might create employment. But the ones who actually go there are those die-hard – and I take my hat off to them – naturalists. It's an effort to get there, and they are a very small number, the minority controlling the majority. We need to consider what is best not only for the Basin, but for the whole country. We don't think nationally as a country. It's like the whining and screaming going on in Vancouver about Prince Rupert putting in a container port. That's not going to affect the container port in Vancouver. Where it will take the business from is Long Beach, California. So now what we'll have are two ports in BC. And guess what? If there's an accident on the railway, or an earthquake in Vancouver that affects their ports – if we had Prince Rupert or Kitimat open, there would be an alternative to keep that product in Canada. Kobe, Japan in '94 had a major earthquake and it closed their port down for seventeen months. But it didn't change the GDP of Japan one per cent because they had other ports and they diversified.

I think the southern part of the province needs to take their blinders off. The need to look at their lifestyle in Vancouver – they have their Sky Train, their social events – and they have to understand where a lot of that wealth is generated: it's generated by the people prepared to live in a place where it's isolated or it snows and it's thirty-below. They have to recognize the economic driver of the province is up in this area they consider wilderness where they can go to camp a couple of times a year. If we don't have economies of scale and a sustainable, reasonably well-thought-out industry in place, it's only a matter of time. It's like a tree that

gets root rot. Eventually all the leaves are going to fall off – and the leaves in this case are in places like Vancouver. I think there's a real lack of perception in BC right now and a lack of trust between what I call the north and the south. What we've seen for years is resource development. Yes, we get the jobs and we get to pay taxes. But the money, power and decision-making is all in that concentrated area. I think they need to realize that any new issue – whether it's offshore oil or anything else – if it gets to the point that the majority of the benefits are going to be in the major centres like Vancouver, I would vote against it.

We have to get over this regionalization – the big city versus the rest of us. We've gone through fourteen years of really tough times in the north. I think there is a consensus across the whole north that development has to happen, but not at any price. Certainly oil and gas should go ahead if it can be done safely, but there has to be a benefit for us who will have to sacrifice a bit of our lifestyle. People in the north can't go down any further economically. People who tend to live in these northern areas are a very resilient bunch, very practical and very determined. If those people in the Lower Mainland don't recognize that, they're in for a rude awakening. I certainly wouldn't be one to suggest we cut the province in half. But the average person down there doesn't comprehend just how determined people are here. They will not tolerate a bunch of people coming up from Vancouver telling us how to do it. People are determined that, if we're going to do it, we're going to do it right.



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# RIC MILLER

TSIMSHIAN/PRINCE RUPERT

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I THINK PRINCE RUPERT IS A VICTIM OF ITS OWN PAST SUCCESS. IF YOU LOOK AT FIFTY YEARS AGO, MINING, FISHING AND FORESTRY WERE IN REAL ABUNDANCE HERE. NOW, WITH THE FISHING IN TROUBLE, FORESTRY IN TROUBLE AND MINING STILL NOT DOING SO WELL, YOU REALIZE THERE WASN'T A WHOLE LOT OF FORWARD PLANNING GOING ON BACK THEN.

**M**Y NAME IS RIC MILLER, AND I'M TSMISHIAN, A MEMBER OF THE KITSUMKALUM BAND near Terrace and the Tsimshian Tribal Council. I was born at the mouth of the Skeena River and I have never lived on a reserve. I was in the military for twenty years, and I put myself through university and became an electrical engineer. I now live in Prince Rupert, which is an economically-deprived town at the moment, but it's a place that shows a lot of potential. There are between ten and twelve thousand people here. I came back here ten years ago after being away for thirty years. It was almost like that movie, Back to the Future – I got that feeling driving up Third Avenue when I returned – the town looks like it did thirty years ago.

What has changed is the First Nations people have come out into the forefront with a much stronger voice. We never even thought of it forty years ago. Still, I walk a lot more comfortably in the European world than I do in the First Nations world – I had been away for so long . But I am now more comfortable in my own culture. These people actually do know what they're talking about, our native elders. They know the link-ages between families, going back to time immemorial if you will. An interesting story: my son came back to visit me in Prince Rupert a couple of years ago and he ended up going to the Nass Valley. There was an old guy there and my son told me the man looked at him and said, "You're from Kitsumkalum, aren't you?" It's quite an intelligence network that's going on. The reason why I use the word "intelligence" is that I did work for a security establishment in Ottawa for about ten years before I came back here, and I'm sure they could pick up ways of getting information from these people out here. Anyways, the communities really had minimal impact on me while growing up. I was a non-status Indian and unfortunately we even had our internal prejudices. I never got a welcome when I'd go to the reservation. At that time everybody knew who were status and who were not, but I had no idea what that was all about.



I think inherently, though, I've always been concerned about the environment – I don't know if that's part of my ancestry or my upbringing – and of course that impacts the way I feel about a lot of things. For example, fish farms. I stood up in public and totally opposed open net fish farming the way it's proposed right now. I worked on the oil and gas project with the tribal council about a year ago. The idea was to bring information to all of the villages and we got to

most of them. Based on all the presentations we made in the four communities and the reaction we got from people, I had pretty much made up my mind how I felt about the issue. We spoke to young people and elders and all of them were very concerned. There were a few younger people who wanted to see development take place, but they were very much in the minority. As one of the elders said: when the tide goes out, our table is set. If we start drilling in the Hecate Strait, between two land masses, something catastrophic could happen. That was the prevailing sentiment among all the communities. We also made presentations here in Prince Rupert, for the urban Indians, and again the majority were against any lifting of the oil and gas moratorium.



I got involved with the CGG purely by accident. They were having a meeting and I was with the tribal council – not employed by them – and they asked me if I would come on. So I did, and I'm happy I did too. The group they put together turned out to be a very good group, very diverse with people of all opinions and backgrounds. I was pretty much in the middle, swinging from left to right – I could understand both sides of the debate – maybe because of how I grew up. At the start I was probably more pro than con. I'm still not totally against it, but when you take the recent spill on the east coast and the actions that continue to happen there, I would rather leave the oil in the ground until technology makes it more safe.

I was on the East Coast tour and I noticed that when you get outside of Halifax and St. John's into the countryside there isn't much evidence of any economic improvement. The bulk of the activity took place in Halifax and in St. John's. So I wonder if it would have a different impact here in BC. Of course there would be some spinoff benefits, but I don't think they would be as great as people think. If oil and gas development does take place, I would like them to leave a legacy of some sort. I'm in the camp that says, why don't we leave the oil in the ground for our future? Oil production probably peaked last year, but our consumption continues to increase and eventually we will run short. We should be thinking long term. In another fifty years it may be much safer. It's safer now than it was ten or fifteen years ago, but accidents are still happening. We have a relatively pristine environment here on the coast, and tourism is picking up every year, so I worry about the effects of oil and gas on that. They're coming here for the pristine environment, and I'm not sure how attractive the offshore oil rigs would be.

I think Prince Rupert is a victim of its own past success. If you look at fifty years ago, mining, fishing and forestry were in real abundance here. Now, with the fishing in trouble, forestry in trouble and mining still not doing so well, you realize there wasn't a whole lot of forward planning going on back then. Now we have to move on and determine where we will go from here. We do have some very good initiatives going on here right now, like the container port coming in, the possibility of LNG [liquid natural gas] coming in. But with all that, we have to remember, come effects to the environment. Another thing is the gateway project [Gateway to Asia pipeline]. If a pipeline with a capacity of four hundred thousand gallons a day is sending that much oil to the coast, the tanker traffic increase should be worrisome. As far as offshore oil and gas goes, it's much more complex than drilling on land, say, up in northeast BC. And we don't have the infrastructure to train these people here in Prince Rupert, so I could see them importing all the

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required skills. I think the job prospects will be limited. We also need to be looking at alternative energy sources, like developing wind farms and other things, although we didn't pay alternative energies a whole lot of attention during the CGG process, because we were more interested in what to do in the event that the oil and gas moratorium would be lifted.

The most useful aspect of the CGG was building a network of people that we can go and speak to. We were able to develop a lot of close contacts which a lot of us now maintain on an ad hoc basis. If I want to go to the Charlottes and speak to anyone, I now know who to go to. It was good in that respect. We formed a fairly close-knit group – at least as close as you can get with people of opposing views – and I think we all walked away with different perceptions. I personally believe the process with UNBC was very useful. Norman Dale was an excellent facilitator – and he was put into a lot of tough situations – he comes highly recommended in my book. The university as a whole – I thought once they got rolling they did a commendable job. The reports coming out of it should be very useful to anyone who's interested in this oil and gas issue. I found it to be a very useful exercise but not everyone in the community can do what I did. I also found this whole oil and gas issue just created polarization within the community of Prince Rupert.

The one thing that struck me was just how complex the issue is. You have to consider every angle, every aspect of the environment, and it is such a complex issue that you need specialists throughout. From what I can see, if it's inevitable that it is going to be lifted – and I hope it's not inevitable – we need to get started now on getting ourselves up to speed. As well, there are a lot more studies that need to be done on the environment before we can even think of lifting the moratorium. We just don't know enough. The studies that have been done by UNBC are very good, but they really just set the stage to conduct more in-depth studies.

The Queen Charlotte Basin as a whole is probably one of the most pristine areas in the world, and the ecology is still largely unknown, so we need to make a concerted effort to understand the unknown and explore more. We also need to remember we are living on a fault zone here. If we make any decisions, we really need to know holistically how we are going to approach this before making any decisions. This is a very precious part of the world and there are First Nations and others who are living off the resources of the sea and land, so we need to be extremely careful, because this is an extremely fragile ecosystem that we are living in. and there's no rush to lift the oil and gas moratorium, nor should there be.



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# ERIKA ROLSTON

PRINCE RUPERT

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PRINCE RUPERT AND  
THE NORTH COAST.

**M**Y NAME IS ERIKA ROLSTON AND MY COMMUNITY IS PRINCE RUPERT. Lax Kxeen is the name for the island we are on. In the Sm'algylax language – the language of the Tsimshian – Lax means on and Kxeen refers to the foam that builds up on Butze rapids. If you're on the east side of the island when the tide changes, the water boils there, and all this foam shoots out and comes into Prince Rupert harbour.

I came up for a job in the summer and stayed. I used to live on the north end of Vancouver Island and I worked in the fishing industry there. I did a lot of different things there, scraping and painting the bottoms of boats, I did some shore working, and I was also a deckhand. I decided to go back to school and learn to become an environmental technologist. I wanted to get a diploma and come back to my little community and do some good by my community. That was my very idealistic intention. So I went to Victoria to go to college, and then came up here for a job in the summer and found out about the Northwest Community College and their environmental program. I worked as an observer for fisheries that summer, a sort of quasi-enforcement job. It was nasty and working dockside was particularly nasty. It started out collecting biological information, scale samples and DNA samples, to keep a record of where in the net different species are caught. And then it evolved into monitoring to see if prohibited species were coming off the boat. I would write up a little occurrence notice, literally it was a pink slip, and hand it to the fisherman, and then the next trick was to avoid getting lynched. I would hand over an occurrence notice, apologize, and vow that I will never do that job again!

But by the end of the summer I decided – literally from one moment to the next – that I was going to move to Prince Rupert. I left here at the end of August and was back here on the ninth of September. I moved all my belongings from Victoria and I've been here ever since. I started working out of the Community Fisheries office with the Streamkeepers program. That program had some wonderful success stories, particularly at the alternate school – where the 'hard luck' kids went when they got kicked out of every other school in town. The one I remember most was a young man who started out the year assessed at a Grade 8 science level and ended at a Grade 12 level. He was definitely the crown jewel of our program, he was just a sponge. These kids just soaked it all up. Actually, it was with the Streamkeepers program that I learned how to talk in public. Before that I was terrified. But I had to go into this classroom to teach Streamkeepers and it was full of fourteen- and fifteen-year-olds, I thought "Show no fear, Erika, or they will eat you alive." I figured if I could survive that, I could survive anything. I did that while going to school, and then the next summer, I had an internship here with World Wildlife Fund Canada.

Oddly enough, coming here I thought that it had less of a community feeling than other small town homes I have had, but at the same time I feel more a part of it. That may be because of all the changes I've experienced, professionally and personally. I am getting better at maximizing my involvement. I don't think I've ever seen potential the way I do here in Prince Rupert and the North Coast. I own a house in Prince Rupert, but I don't really consider myself a Prince Rupert resident. I am a North Coast resident. Right now I'm based out of Prince Rupert, but that's mainly because of the schools here. I intend to never leave the north coast, but I don't know that Prince Rupert will always be my home. People who knew me before I came here say there is an enormous difference in the way I carry myself. I'm definitely more political, I'm much more involved with community members, I volunteer more. But I am starting to see many more solutions than I ever saw before – I see 'problems' as opportunities.



The biggest challenges here are those that come from isolation. Geographic isolation is a challenge, but I think that's fairly minor and something we can deal with – in fact people in these communities have been dealing with that for ages. Social isolation is a bigger challenge. And apathy is a huge challenge here. People are so accustomed to not being heard, that many have given up trying. The North Coast has always been a place where people could succeed if they were hard workers. People would say, Come to the North Coast and you can make a really good living. Even if you quit school in Grade 6, you could still get a job, work hard and make a good living. It's not like that anymore and there is a lot of resistance, and possibly some resentment, to that change. I think a lot of people think that now you have to get a master's degree before you can succeed in a career, so many just throw up their hands and give up. But I really think the reality is somewhere down the middle.

The existing industries – fishing, forestry, mining – all of these things have been approached in such an unsustainable way that we absolutely must rethink. That's not to say that those industries are over. We just need to find a new approach. I really notice the boom and bust trend of Prince Rupert and the North Coast economies and I think that this mindset is also a major stumbling block. We need to get out of that mentality of looking for the next boom, because I don't think the North Coast could stand another bust. The big sudden booms don't allow for any infrastructure or local capacity building to be able to support a boom. You need a lot of bodies to handle those surges, and a lot of knowledgeable people. The Prince Rupert population is falling and I really fear that if there is another boom, many of the people required to work those jobs would have to be imported rather than local.

I see the possibility of the oil and gas industry starting here as something that brings many challenges to the communities, and not as many opportunities. There are many opportunities in advance of ANY industry, particularly in establishing environmental baselines. Much of the science required is just straight-up data collection, and doesn't require a highly skilled workforce. I do see many opportunities for developing collaborative research initiatives. Take, for instance, the fishing boats. They're out on the ocean all the time, so why not just hire one of them to collect the data, rather than paying thousands of dollars a day just to move the Tully IOS research vessel away from the dock. I see a lot of really amazing partnership possibilities in advance of any industry, including oil and gas. However, there is always the question of 'who pays'. I don't know that the boom in research dollars is going to happen until after the industry and government know if there are any reserves down there worth going after. If the industry finds a significant deposit then they most likely would provide money for some research. But until that happens, what point is there in the oil and gas industry investing a lot of money in something they don't know yet will give them a good return. They have to do the seismic testing, but my understanding is that the moratorium doesn't apply to seismic. No one seems able to give me a definite answer. As far as I know the only thing they need to do to get the seismic going is to apply a Canadian Environmental Assessment and they can make that as lame as they want. It doesn't have to include a full public consultation. From what I have managed to glean, they've been doing seismics around here for years. It's just a matter of intensity.

Before I went to the East Coast I knew nothing about the oil and gas industry. When I went there my biggest fears about the industry were the possibility of spills and our location in an earthquake zone. Coming back I realized those fears are much less significant than the fear of seismic testing. Again, they don't know enough about it. We had one presentation on the East Coast that said seismic testing kills one percent of the larvae by volume so they said it's not significant. But there's a cumulative effect when you consider all the other impacts on the fish. If seismic kills one percent, and over-harvesting kills one percent, and contamination kills on percent, and all the other impacts - how much can the fish stock endure? The cumulative impact of existing pressures on our marine environment are not understood, never mind adding another pressure in the form of high intensity seismic testing. They're doing all this seismic work on the East Coast but we don't know what impact it's having on their fisheries. There was one round of testing that had been done at the time of the East Coast trip and that study consisted of one female adult snow crab in a tank that showed no behavioural changes after exposure to seismic blasts. So the conclusion from that was there was no impact. That presentation was followed by another that indicated we can't use behavior to determine if there is any impact. For instance, with whales, they all act differently when they are stressed. Some stop eating, some stop singing, some are attracted to the activity and check it out.

Norman Dale was the one who got me involved in NCIRP. Norman was going through Prince Rupert introducing himself to the community and letting people know about the NCIRP program. Norman thought that my position working for an environmental organization and my involvement with the community would be a good background for the work. It did put me in a good place to disseminate the information when I received it as well as receiving feedback from community members that reflected their point of view. I use the word "reflect" deliberately, we were not asked to represent anyone except ourselves.

I expected to learn more about off shore oil and gas, about the industry itself, the resource, about the regulations and legislation in place, the monitoring and how they're enforced. I expected to learn more and really see how the rubber would hit the road more than it did. As I understood it, I was invited to go to the East Coast and then continue with the Community Guidance Group and serve as an informed core for my



THE CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF EXISTING PRESSURES ON OUR MARINE ENVIRONMENT ARE NOT UNDERSTOOD, NEVER MIND ADDING ANOTHER PRESSURE IN THE FORM OF HIGH INTENSITY SEISMIC TESTING.

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I THINK THAT, BECAUSE NO ONE OF US COULD SPEAK ON BEHALF OF THE COMMUNITY GUIDANCE GROUP, AND BECAUSE WE NEVER CAME TO ANY CONSENSUS, IT RESULTED IN THE CGG BEING A LARGELY UNKNOWN ENTITY. THAT BEING SAID, LACK OF CONSENSUS ITSELF IS VERY REFLECTIVE OF THE NORTH COAST.

community. The idea was that I was kind of like this little pebble that would be dropped in the pond of Prince Rupert and the ripples would go out, resulting in more people being informed. That was what I had expected. But there were very few ripples, which I think is in part, a reflection on the personal commitment of people in the group and in part, the usual bugs that plague experimental/innovative/untested university research programs – especially one that is given an utterly unrealistic timeline. I think that, because none of us could speak on behalf of the Community Guidance Group, and because we never came to any consensus, it resulted in the CGG being a largely unknown entity. That being said, lack of consensus itself is very reflective of the north coast. This is the way life is here. Remember though, lack of consensus does not have to mean all conflict. One thing I learned on the East Coast trip is that, although approaching issues as black and white may make for more sensational media, most issues are actually in shades of grey.

The CGG did brainstorm some great project ideas and we discussed a lot of the issues that were major stumbling blocks to us becoming a region of coastal communities – a community of communities, so to speak. We all have this same ocean and its currents and that’s what connects us. Other than that it really isn’t a region. Within our group we really shined the light on those broken trust issues and the lack of relationships and mistrust, both between and within communities. A lot of those kinds of feelings were aired and addressed within our group. We began to develop relationships based on trust and came to understand the benefit of having the meetings in the communities. I can’t even begin to describe the benefits that aspect of the process had on the communities – to have people travel to the various communities to learn about those communities and their people. If I want someone to understand Prince Rupert, they need to be here. I can’t explain to you what it is like to be in Prince Rupert from Vancouver. So from the start I said there was no way I was going to sit down in Vancouver in meetings to discuss potential futures of Prince Rupert. I felt very strongly about that. I went to every single meeting. I don’t know how else I would ever be able to understand where people were coming from and their communities. In Port Hardy we stayed at the Airport Inn and didn’t even get to see the town itself. But when we went to Kitimat, Diane made a point of taking us to the Methanex plant for a tour. We went to the Kitimat Valley Institute, and all of a sudden my eyes were opening up – that’s why Kitimat is talking about this industry as a potential good news story, that’s why they’re coming from that perspective. It doesn’t mean I agree, but at least I have a better idea where they’re coming from. Another community’s solution might not work in my community but that is OK. But having that understanding requires honest communication and strong relationships. That is not the case, currently, in coastal communities. Instead of mining the collaborative potential across the region, each community tends to approach potential development from its own little silo. We end up in competition. Instead of having the win-win of both community and region benefiting, we have win-lose, where only communities benefit, possibly at the detriment of the region. Having the Community Guidance Group hold its meetings across the region was enormously important as it brought to light, the enormous potential in relationship building and a collaborative, big picture approach to development.

I think UNBC should have done what they were planning in the first place and established the Community Guidance Group in advance of administering or setting contracts. If for no other reason, the contractors would know Community Guidance Group members and it probably would have improved the usefulness of the information exchange. I don’t want to be hard on UNBC because it’s all growing pains when you’re learning how to work with different communities and with such a diverse bunch of individuals. In my mind it would have been wiser to start out a little slower in order to make sure everyone is engaged before you go on. But I know everything was on a timeline and the province was jumping because they weren’t getting

instant results. Unfortunately, the timelines just got completely in the way, with the province, the feds and UNBC operating on three completely different timelines. Hopefully the university has learned something about dealing with coastal communities, which are a very different animal from interior communities, northern communities or urban communities. Whether by luck or design, UNBC seems to have awakened a sleeping giant, the network of this coastal region. I think that most of the CGG members do see it as a coastal region with a much broader horizon. We need to ensure a commitment to this growing and evolving network. It is a network of unseen connections between Prince Rupert, Terrace, Kitimat, Port Clements, Bella Coola and all the rest, and because of this process there are all these connections that now require maintenance. I would say, though, that we're off on a pretty solid start. Although UNBC does have an office here, it is such a limited presence that I don't know that it does that much to improve coastal communities' perceptions about UNBC. Not that there won't be ample opportunity down the road. There are all kinds of coastal and marine issues up and coming that universities could be very supportive of and interested in, I expect. But I think it was probably better for the university than it was for the communities in terms of learning. I don't know what lasting benefit it will have at UNBC, and I fear that a data set is lost now, with John Backhouse and Norman gone. Hopefully we'll have some record of this work – recording the CGG members' experiences and learnings is a great start. I think it was really laudable, the original intent of the university setting up NCIRP.



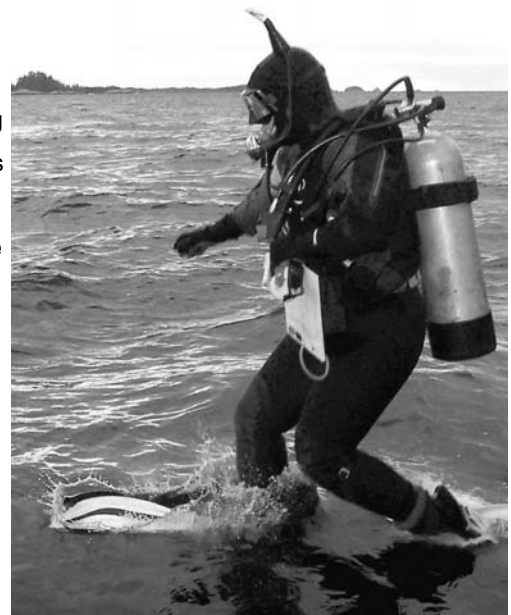
In the final analysis, though, life is very different here and applying a model out of Vancouver or Ottawa won't work here, in fact, if it worked in a big city you can almost guarantee it won't work here.

If an oil and gas industry goes ahead, Prince Rupert will likely benefit as a shipping and service centre. The local hotels will do well, and charter companies will do well. Unless we work out a stronger Pacific Accord, though, I don't see a lot of benefits coming to individual communities, except for what we can claw back from the provincial or federal revenues. I don't think that's enough, though. We already have existing industries here. Our fishing industry, despite what the scuttlebutt may be in some circles, is far from dead. I think it's our responsibility to ensure its continued future. For instance, taking care of our wild stocks here should be a much higher priority than bringing in a new industry that will add further pressure to those stocks. Specifically, I'm thinking of salmon. The economics of the salmon fishery here right now is nothing compared to the crab industry, which is going gangbusters. But with the expansion of salmon farming on the North Coast, there could be a huge negative impact on a lot of growth industries from that. Even if there isn't a problem with oil and gas specifically, then there are still other chronic problems such as the increased vessel traffic. There is way more oil in the ocean from bilges than from oil spills. There is going to be increased pollution. You can't really measure all of the impacts. We have guidelines but no regulations about what a shipping industry does, for instance, with its ballast water. They're not supposed to pump oily water into the ocean, but walk down to the dock and you can see that's not an enforced (or enforceable, really) regulation. I would suspect the oil and gas industry itself has learned a lot about how not to be bad guys. And they don't want to be bad guys. So I'm certain the industry would put forward all

kinds of feel-good local projects, perhaps helping with parks, schools, building a playground, and those kinds of things. But in terms of contributing to real solid infrastructure or capacity building, I don't see that happening. I mean, I doubt that they would build, for instance, a UNBC campus here on the coast. Why would they?

I think that if there is one thing I learned from all of this, it's that I know nothing about how a local economy or a local community fits into the global economy. The global economy, from where I'm sitting, commands resources away from the small communities. It looks to me like bigger isn't necessarily better when it comes to economy. I'm just barely coming out of a lifelong position of political ignorance, so perhaps that's why I feel that way, but it doesn't seem to me that Prince Rupert would benefit directly from an oil and gas industry other than with some service jobs. I mean, I can't see the industry's workers coming to live here, or buying homes here. After all, in these times, if you're working a job that pays enough, you can live anywhere you want. I chose to leave here because it's Eden to me, an absolute heaven on earth. We really need to work on diversifying our economy, and we can't afford to put all our eggs into the oil and gas basket. It doesn't make any sense. My vision for the north coast just doesn't center on an oil and gas industry. If the industry is going to come here at all, we need to get the information initiatives underway now, collecting all the important data so we can make informed management and development decisions. One survey is not a baseline. If these were underway now we could be collecting ten years of information before they start drilling. We could have already had twenty years. The moratorium was put in place and they said we have all this work to do before we can lift it, and then they shelved it. The federal government is not making any statements about the moratorium, and unless they do make some statement I can't see the feds or the province giving money to research. They put a lot of money out to develop an industry, but they don't put any money into allowing for all the important research that needs to be completed before we open our doors to industry. I really think that our human capacity to create technology far outstrips our human capacity to plan for that technology and that's really a dangerous thing. I'm not saying we don't need better technology. I am just saying we need to learn how to properly and responsibly use what we have first.

I've made sarcastic comments before about how Victoria and Vancouver will all have the finest park benches for us to sleep on when there aren't any jobs left, bought with the revenues of the resource industries here. It's difficult for me to believe that something that could be a provincial or federal economic driver is a good thing if it's at the cost of my community. I'm not willing to make that exchange. The idea that we're being asked to shoulder all that risk is just unacceptable. As a child, I remember being told that you have to be a complete idiot to starve on the coast. In our part of the world, even if you have no money in your bank account, you can still go down to the beach and gather all your food. But in Prince Rupert, proper, all of the areas we can walk to or access by road are very industrialized sites. So you can't necessarily collect your food that way, unless you have a boat to go



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THE MORATORIUM WAS PUT IN PLACE AND THEY SAID WE HAVE ALL THIS WORK TO DO BEFORE WE CAN LIFT IT, AND THEN THEY SHELVED IT. THEY PUT A LOT OF MONEY OUT TO DEVELOP AN INDUSTRY, BUT THEY DON'T PUT ANY MONEY INTO ALLOWING FOR ALL THE IMPORTANT RESEARCH THAT NEEDS TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE WE OPEN OUR DOORS TO INDUSTRY.

away from the harbor. There are twelve raw sewage outflows in this harbor, so seafood caught there is questionable. So it's a lot harder on this side (of the Hecate Strait) to imagine an empty bank account and managing any kind of stability. You rely on your bank account to put food on your table, so the jobs argument gets a lot more play around here. That being said, I have never met anyone who feels that sustainability and environmental concerns are not valid issues; they just don't necessarily agree on how to work them, what would they look like.

To me a lot of this is just a game of speculation, and I can play that game too. There's a lot of energy – chemical and mechanical – held in hydrocarbon molecules. Maybe just straight up rapid combustion isn't the best way to use that energy. Maybe we haven't even encountered yet the technologies that will cleanly combust hydrocarbon molecules. Maybe we need to find another way to consume it and get the energy that way. It is a speculation game. We already have alternative technology to run our cars, to push our boats, heat our homes. People may not like it and say it's not as efficient – that just means it's not as fast. With the internal combustion engine and its one central engine that has to turn the energy from one direction to another, you're lucky to get ten percent efficiency out of your motor car. Most of the energy from your hydrocarbon molecule goes to smoke, noise and heat. It doesn't go to pushing your car forward. There are a lot of things we're going to need those oil and gas reserves for. Pushing our cars around and heating our homes – we have other ways to do those things. We still go out and spending \$30,000 on vehicles that suck the gas, that's money that could have been spent more wisely; especially in the face of climate change and the Kyoto Accord – and Canada signed that accord – we have a commitment, whether or not some Canadians like it, it is still a commitment. And here on the North Coast I take that commitment very much to heart.

I look at my harbor and I see the water reflecting green and I know my north coast contributes more to the oxygen we all breathe than any other place in North America. It's such a rich and productive ecosystem. I'm a SCUBA diver and I tell you, when you go out there, you can't see anything and that's because our water is so productive that the visibility is really reduced when the plankton is growing. That's where seventy to ninety percent of the air we breathe comes from – the surface of the ocean. Most of the plant growth we have on earth is located in the coastal regions. It really is all connected, and nowhere do you see that more clearly than in these coastal areas. You can't describe this coastal ecosystem as land and water. You just can't separate them. The ocean requires the land just as the land requires the ocean and the two of them working together. The salmon go up, leave their bodies, the forest grows and gets healthy and diverse, and as it runs down it's feeding the salmon and the bears, and then the ocean and the plankton. It is such an incredibly diverse place, the ocean. It is almost ironic that, issues such as development or conservation cause such rifts between those who make decisions that are either environmentally OR economically safe. The reason it is ironic is that those decisions MUST make sense, both environmentally and economically.

When I do outreach in elementary school classrooms I often ask the students to name seven seas, and everyone just rattles them off. And then I show them a globe and ask them if they can see the lines between each ocean, so I know where the Pacific ends and the Atlantic begins, or where the Pacific ends and the Indian Ocean begins. But there aren't any borders on oceans. Our oceans circulate globally. In the big scheme of things the ocean is one great big thermohaline (thermo – temperature, haline – saltiness) conveyor belt and the impacts of what we are doing now – industrial, residential and agricultural runoff, hardening shorelines – are likely to have influences we haven't ever even considered. In order to see how important that food web is we only need to look at one of the shortest food chains out there: plankton, krill,

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WE ALREADY HAVE ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGY TO RUN OUR CARS, TO PUSH OUR BOATS, HEAT OUR HOMES. PEOPLE MAY NOT LIKE IT AND SAY IT'S NOT AS EFFICIENT – THAT JUST MEANS IT'S NOT AS FAST.

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I LOOK AT MY HARBOR AND I SEE THE WATER REFLECTING GREEN AND I KNOW MY NORTH COAST CONTRIBUTES MORE TO THE OXYGEN WE ALL BREATHE THAN ANY OTHER PLACE IN NORTH AMERICA.



blue whale. And then you could separate them and put a thousand food webs in the middle. We're sitting on top of the food web and we should be very, very concerned about what we're putting into the environment. It's really difficult to get rural communities to lower their environmental footprint when they are surrounded by relatively intact ecosystems. They often feel that it's the urban communities that really need to make changes. You know, a Hummer around Vancouver makes absolutely no sense. And one person in a Hummer makes even less sense. The fact that around the world there are places with air quality announcements warning asthmatics to stay inside should be very alarming to all of us.

Regardless of what we look like from however many thousands of miles away, no matter what you read in the newspapers or hear on the press releases or see on TV, we are not just a bunch of naysayers. We are not up here just to stop everything that comes our way. But I do think more people need to appreciate the role coastal communities play in our Canadian way of life. I defy anyone anywhere to paint a clear picture of Canadian identity that does not include coastal communities. I defy anyone to define British Columbia without a thriving marine environment. It simply can't be done. The culture that has developed around coastal communities can't be found anywhere else. We have loggers, fishermen, First Nations, other cultures from around the world, and they came here and it doesn't matter where they started – now they're West Coasters. It's a very unique culture. These guys have been killing fish and trees forever, and we can continue to do that forever as long as we're smart about it – in fact, that is practically at the heart of sustainability. But we need to plan for that, and there is wisdom in slowing down and taking stock of your situation and making plans to move ahead instead of just charging forward. And that's really clear here on the North Coast. If anywhere on earth can be called pristine, we're pretty close to that. We have a responsibility to protect it to make sure it's used properly so it can be used forever. That's my dream for this coast. I really think people elsewhere need to appreciate, even if they cannot understand, why we feel this way. It seems very difficult to convey to an urbanite or academic, that I am not to be pitied for living in a small community without many amenities. I chose this lifestyle. I didn't move to a rural community just so I could help turn it into an urban one! Though there will never be a return to the 'good old days', the future of rural communities is still loaded with potential.

If we had more pride in our Canadian identity I don't think we would have these kinds of problems. People know that diversity is at the core of what Canadians are. What is Canadian culture? How do you answer that? I could tell you that it includes loggers and fishermen, very much so. We don't want to just be stopping every development that comes our way. But we do need to be afforded the time and resources to develop a plan ourselves. It needs to be developed locally and include not just Prince Rupert, but the entire region. People here need to declare what values we want to protect forever, areas where we do not want technology or industry to influence, and what areas are not so sensitive. A lot of that information is available, but the aging population – the elders – hold a lot of that information and we should be very concerned about the amount of information that we may be losing, information that would really be valuable in long term. I just wish there was a pause button for the entire world. We do too much crisis management in this country. We're not worried about the salmon stocks when they only LOOK like they're in trouble. We should be worried that the Atlantic cod have nearly completely vanished. A little bit of a proactive movement might be beneficial. When northern coastal communities say no to something, we come across as being a community that just wants to return to the glory days. There are certainly those who feel that way, but overall we need to focus our attention inward. That means that across the country people need to acknowledge the fact that the west coast and east coast fisherman are an important part of our culture. Would we feel like we lived in an impoverished Canada if we didn't have coastal communities? I certainly would. I pray that I never find out what that feels like.

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IF ANYWHERE ON EARTH CAN BE CALLED PRISTINE, WE'RE PRETTY CLOSE TO THAT. WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT IT TO MAKE SURE IT'S USED PROPERLY SO IT CAN BE USED FOREVER. THAT'S MY DREAM FOR THIS COAST.





I think the gas could be taken out of the sea bottom, put it in a tanker and shipped overseas, as opposed to bringing it into port. The Trans-mountain line would bring gas this way, and it could be shipped back inland because the US needs it, as well as to Vancouver Island as they basically use oil. It would give them another option and would be a tremendous benefit. So, I support oil and gas development, as long as it can be done safely – and I think it can. I've seen the safety precautions first-hand. Even just the receiving of a tank truck – all the precautions you have to take, safety valves, bleed offs, suction to make sure if the valve didn't hold inside that it would run back into the tank, check valves for pumping, emergency valves, measuring the tank to make sure what was in there was equal to what came out, residues – you have to answer to all those things. The same with a ship – you have to make sure the fuel coming up goes in the tank and not over the top. It used to be two people – one from the ship and one from shore – they'd go up and measure and do all the calculations, then tell the pumper to start pumping – then walk the pipeline every hour.

The comments I get from oil people about the Valdez spill is that if we had just left it alone, it would have all returned back to the sea bed. But because we put chemicals and emulsifiers and everything else in there, and we got in there with blow torches and scrubbers – we made more damage. The amount of money generated from the Valdez spill and the clean up is more than was generated by the gold rush. It was like having another gold rush. I worried about – and I still do – the birds and the seals and the wildlife and the animals that do swim in the water and walk down to the beaches. But accidents do happen. You know, a long time ago, if they had an old valve or something, they'd just throw it overboard. Now you don't throw anything overboard. Now it's inventoried on, inventoried off and inventoried for disposal. The muds – the drill goes down packed with mud and the mud's used for lubricant – and when it came back up, they used to dump that over the side too and it would spread all over the ocean bottom. But now they have to put it all in barrels and tankers and barges and haul it away. So it's improved tremendously over the last twenty years. Plus they've got people on the barges and on the rigs and that's all they do. They're safety inspectors. They don't really belong to the oil company, but they're there policing.

If an oil and gas industry does start up here, then you need storage tanks, you need a way to ship it, and that means you need a bigger pipeline. That means jobs for building the tanks, building the pipelines, the storage, the tankers, the tank cars, the trucks. Plus you need some place to sort all this pipe out. This is what Terrace is working on right now. They would like to be the holding area for all this stuff, because



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WITH MY WORK, WE DIDN'T SPILL A DROP OF OIL ON THE GROUND. IT WAS BRED INTO US THAT WE WOULD NOT LET THAT HAPPEN. I'VE SEEN IT ALL FROM THE INSIDE AND THAT'S AN ADVANTAGE. I SUPPORT OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT, AS LONG AS IT CAN BE DONE SAFELY – AND I THINK IT CAN. I'VE SEEN THE SAFETY PRECAUTIONS FIRST-HAND.

they've got a whole lot of land, and we don't have a lot of land for storage. Now, of course, not every community will benefit. All the villages would probably not benefit. But I also hear that any place a windmill or an oil rig is operating, there are fish in abundance, because it changes the water – it makes it a little warmer and there are fishermen who say they catch more fish in these areas. So an oil and gas industry creates jobs.

I really didn't know what to expect when I joined the UNBC project. But I found it to be very useful because I got an understanding of what the communities expected but didn't know about. Sonic testing was a big thing. Some people thought you were going to drop dynamite off a ship or something. There was a lot of misinformation out there and we wanted to make sure there was a central location these people could get accurate information from. There has been a lot of internal fighting along the coast and even



within the communities about who is going to get what if and when the oil industry goes ahead here. Like with Kitimat right now – we've said we really don't care who gets what as long as we all benefit. The thing is there is so much confusion now that no one knows what the heck is going on, especially with all these government hearings and reports. We didn't hold hearings. We went and talked to people. That's why I enjoy the university program. Sure we spent \$2 million, but it was important to do that. How else are the people in these small communities going to know what is going on.

The most important thing I've taken from this process is the importance of consultation with all of those concerned. We need more consultation and less confrontation.

Going to the east coast was a great experience for me because we were able to meet people and listen to what they thought they were getting in terms of an oil and gas industry, and what they ended up getting. It was really an eye-opener. When they found that the pipelines were going either north or south, there's nothing in between except work.

The process didn't change my opinion. Every time we'd go somewhere I either talked to the mayor of Masset or Port Clements, because they're both on the regional district board. We would talk, and then we had the big oil and gas debate at the UBCM [Union of BC Municipalities] where we had our mayors fighting each other, verbally that is. It's not so much that we all don't get along, but they're both stubborn in a sense. One believes one thing a hundred percent and the other believes if you stomp on the ground the oil comes bubbling up. But we managed to talk a lot. With Erika, too, if there was something I wasn't sure about I'd call her. The process was good because it was about all the questions of who, what, where, when, why, and trying to come up with answers that would satisfy, because we didn't know all the answers. We still can't say that the oil is going to Port Hardy and the gas is going to Prince Rupert, because we don't know, there might not be anything out there to drill. But I do believe we have to take advantage of it if it's there.

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# TERESA RYAN

TSIMSHIAN/PRINCE RUPERT

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THE TSMISHIAN  
HAVE EXISTED ON  
THE NORTH COAST  
OF BC FOR OVER  
10,000 YEARS.  
THE HEREDITARY  
SYSTEM, ACCORDING  
TO TSMISHIAN LAW,  
MAINTAINS FULL  
GOVERNANCE  
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TERRITORY. NO  
ACTIVITY WILL  
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TRADITIONAL  
TERRITORY  
WITHOUT US.

I AM TSMISHIAN, BORN INTO THE HOUSE OF XPE HANAAX, GANHADA CLAN of the Gitlan tribe of the Tsimshian Nation, which is also my community. The English language doesn't have the right words to convey the meaning of being Tsimshian and the interconnectedness to our environment. Being Tsimshian is not just a cultural or national identity; it is the fabric of my soul. My background is in science and resource management. My grandfather, George Duncan Lagaud (Tom) Ryan, insisted I go into fisheries science when I was a child. At the time I didn't understand why, because I didn't expect to fish as he had done most of his life. It wasn't until later that I understood that from the time I was about seven years of age, when he used to take me with him while he worked on his fishing boat or the nets, he had in fact started training me for my career path. I now have a Bachelor of Science in Fisheries Aquatic Ecology, a Master of Science in Resource Management, and I'm currently enrolled in a PhD program at the University of British Columbia Institute of Resources, Environment and Sustainability. I work for the Tsimshian Nation as Executive Director and administer a number of activities, including the development and management of natural resource programs (aquatic resources, forestry, land assets, energy and mines), economic development, training and education programs, communications, and treaty. I also participate as a scientist on the Pacific Salmon Commission Joint Chinook Technical Committee and the Skeena Fisheries Commission Technical Committee. I sit on the BC Pacific Salmon Forum, and also on the Board of Directors for Ocean Industries BC.

The Tsimshian have existed on the North Coast of BC for over 10,000 years. We continue to rely on the natural amenities of the region to put food on our tables. The Tsimshian Nation is the First Nation that occupies the Lower Skeena River, Lower Nass River and one-third of the British Columbia coast. The Queen Charlotte Basin is in Tsimshian territory. The hereditary system, according to Tsimshian law, maintains full governance authority over all of Tsimshian territory. No activity will proceed in our traditional territory without us.

The population of the Tsimshian Nation, by federal standards, is about 10,500, with 7,500 in Canada and 3,000 in the US. However, we estimate there to be about 45,000 members that, through assimilation and statutory, economic and societal oppression, have disbursed to other areas outside of our traditional territory. Approximately 6,000 Tsimshian live in or near Prince Rupert. The city of Prince Rupert is now comprised of over fifty percent First Nations people, consisting of Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Haida and Gitksan. The latter three First Nations are neighbour nations on upper Nass River, Haida Gwaii, and upper Skeena River respectively.

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First Nations face many challenges, the most important being the difficulty we have had regaining access to our natural resources. If we had access, we would be able to create a better quality of life than what we now know, one that we were accustomed to through protection of our Tsimshian territory before European contact. We are still plagued in our daily lives by the cultural differences between two worlds and the compounding impacts of this dichotomy. Our communities face eighty to ninety percent unemployment rates; our health care has diminished drastically as a result of government funding cuts (and an increased incidence of chronic and fatal disease), and both governments continue to legislate away control of our resources (through regulations, long range management plans, and statutory changes). Oil and gas has appeared as yet another industry intent on coming into our territory and taking resources. It's happened with fur, land, fisheries, mining and forestry for over two hundred years, and other than the questionable benefits of the fur trade, we have never received any benefits from resource extraction activities. It will never happen again.

The NCIRP program was given \$2 million to conduct research in the Queen Charlotte Basin, in our territory. This was largely seen as another threat to our resources because we have wanted to conduct research for many years and for many reasons. NCIRP representatives came to the Tsimshian Tribal Council office to explain their program and ask if we would like to participate in what would later become known as the Community Guidance Group. We agreed to participate, with the caveat that not one project would be allowed to result in “telling us what to do” regarding the offshore oil and gas issue.

The Community Guidance Group was a unique assemblage of people from communities surrounding the Queen Charlotte Basin. The meetings were held in various Queen Charlotte Basin communities, which was hugely beneficial for nurturing the interpersonal experience and developing the context of “place” that is so important to each one of us living in the region. It was an opportunity to network with people from other communities and to understand perspectives on a regional scale in a contemporary context. First Nations historically met in very similar ways for cultural exchange and commercial trade. The most useful aspect of the CGG was the direct interaction with people from other communities, the chance to express the First Nations perspective, and hear about small communities' challenges. The CGG brought people from coastal communities together for discussion. It was an unencumbered process to exchange dialogue,

and I truly believe we participated in an historic model of reciprocity that involved sharing our visions and shaping our future. We may not have the chance to capture the unique interactions of this group again, but it does give each one of us the ability to know that others in the region share the same concerns, the same water, and the same vision to protect the sacred nature of our home while engaging in opportunities that sustain healthy communities. It was also helpful to have an agenda format that allowed us to address unusually complex issues. In a way, it was like a test case for consensus-building even though it didn't really have the intention of concluding in a tangible product. And it provided a forum to review the research projects in a manner that not only valued feedback, but integrated it into the projects as well.

The only real problem I had with the UNBC program as a whole was that it was based at a university that is eight hours away from Queen Charlotte Basin. It can't be understated that, given the economic depression of the region, when UNBC received \$2 million to study the coast, the local community felt disenfranchised. Setting up the NCIRP in Prince George exacerbated that sentiment. If the NCIRP had been administered from offices near the QCB, the projects and the participation may have looked very different, and quite possibly they may have been conducted from within the region's communities. I also would have liked to have seen it develop more as a seed program leading to more meaningful participation by coastal communities in the development of further university projects and programs in coastal communities. As it was, the process served UNBC well in terms of its program development. It has also provided project results that will help build the university's academic stature. And, to be fair, it has provided a step towards bridging the geographic gap between the coast and the main campus in Prince George. It would now seem timely for the university to recognize and acknowledge the opportunities it has had, and the relationships it has built, and to continue to develop its capacity by establishing degree programs in the coastal communities. The NCIRP process has helped facilitate an initial preparedness for a potential new industry by conducting appropriate research related to the discussions. Hopefully the process will also lead to additional, academically-rigorous research. The NCIRP could serve an ongoing role as a focal point for coastal communities to become informed as well as to facilitate discussion between coastal community members. I think the CGG brought a community perspective to the university's research and provided a way for the university to begin to understanding the dynamic nature of maritime communities.

During the NCIRP process I gained a new appreciation for the similarities in the challenges that coastal communities face. For example, I learned that all coastal communities have been negatively impacted by industrial changes that focus on economies of scale, and that remote communities share a common challenge in being isolated from the policy makers that create the government regulations and controls affecting the quality of life in rural BC. The people in coastal communities share the same desire to improve economic conditions, protect the environment, and enhance their natural resiliency in order to withstand externally-produced market fluctuations and regulatory control. It seems obvious that the interconnection of people throughout the region is consistent with the historic interconnections First Nations people have enjoyed. The NCIRP process showed me that, at the community level, people throughout the Queen Charlotte Basin have recognized the importance of healthy relationships with local First Nations and the common issues they share on many levels, and that

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IT WOULD NOW SEEM TIMELY FOR THE UNIVERSITY TO RECOGNIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE OPPORTUNITIES IT HAS HAD, AND THE RELATIONSHIPS IT HAS BUILT, AND TO CONTINUE TO DEVELOP ITS CAPACITY BY ESTABLISHING DEGREE PROGRAMS IN THE COASTAL COMMUNITIES.



they recognize and respect the cultural differences and autonomy while facilitating opportunities to build communication.

We have watched industries come and go in the last two hundred years, and we have consistently asked governments and industry to help us with specific research, particularly examining natural resource abundance and habitat. In more recent times, the social aspects of communities have also been recognized as being in need of attention through research. The opportunities provided by offshore oil and gas include the ability for us to conduct some or all of these kinds of research. The challenges will be helping our people prepare themselves with the skill sets necessary to accommodate economic growth (in any industry), especially without having access to universities on the North Coast.

As for what happens if an oil and gas industry does go ahead in this area, the only “if” is whether or not the resource is economically feasible to recover. The answer to that will only be found through exploration. It will take a few years, and it could just as easily yield the answer that it is not economically viable. Whatever impacts there are will not be immediate, but will rather be phased in over time as an industry develops. The location of the community I live in happens to have convenient marine access to Asia and US markets, rail transportation across Canada, and pipeline proposals pending. The North Coast is Canada’s economic Pacific Gateway to the world. It is a vision that was put into practice by coastal First Nations through extensive trade networks, and again recognized by Charles Hays at the turn of the twentieth century. The contemporary vision remains the same; it’s just the economics that have grown in scale. With or without an oil and gas industry the Prince Rupert area will once again prosper as a trade centre because of the availability of natural resources and the natural amenities of the region.

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THE NORTH COAST IS CANADA’S ECONOMIC PACIFIC GATEWAY TO THE WORLD. IT IS A VISION THAT WAS PUT INTO PRACTICE BY COASTAL FIRST NATIONS THROUGH EXTENSIVE TRADE NETWORKS, AND AGAIN RECOGNIZED BY CHARLES HAYS AT THE TURN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. THE CONTEMPORARY VISION REMAINS THE SAME; IT’S JUST THE ECONOMICS THAT HAVE GROWN IN SCALE.



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# LEO GAGNON

HAIDA/MASSET

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ALL MY FAMILY'S UP IN ALASKA, AND THE NATIVE RESERVES UP THERE ALL SOLD OUT FOR OIL AND GAS. THERE'S REALLY BEEN NO BENEFITS, THEY'VE LOST THEIR RESERVES ENTIRELY, AND THERE WERE NO JOBS AT ALL. I DON'T KNOW THAT WE'D EVEN CONSIDER IT. MY ADVICE – JUST STAY AWAY.

**M**Y NAME IS LEO GAGNON AND I'M THE DEPUTY CHIEF COUNCILLOR OF OLD MASSET village council. I was born and raised here. We're pretty much a fishing community, with some people working in the forestry sector. Also people around here live off of the sea. There's not a whole lot of commerce around. Employment is pretty low. Probably about seventy-five percent of our survival is from the ocean here and has been as far back as I can remember. It's a pollution-free life here.

I got involved in the UNBC process at the request of council to get informed about what's going on with oil and gas. We've been following it for quite a few years. I had quite a bit of knowledge about it already. I really didn't know what to expect going into the process, but I didn't really learn anything I didn't already know.

I was really disappointed with the East Coast study trip. I couldn't get any of the people to speak up down there. I wanted to hear how their lives were affected by oil and gas, but they weren't open to talking about it. The only ones we met were the ones heavily involved in the industry, no one else, and we didn't even get to meet any Natives, so that kind of makes me even more opposed to it. After that, I didn't bother attending anymore of the Community Guidance Group meetings. It was too costly for our council. I didn't find it to be useful at all. If anything I think it caused a lot of dissension in our communities, just the fact that council was seen to be involved with oil and gas – the community didn't view that very well at all, and assumed we were involved in the development when we were just trying to get information. When they have a mindset, it's hard to change their minds about what they think. I just try to explain to them. I've got boxes and boxes of files on oil and gas and I say, If you're interested, come and have a look.

I'm opposed to lifting the moratorium, and the council is officially opposed because we just like our sea pollution-free. That's just the way it is. All my family's up in Alaska, and the native reserves up there all sold out for oil and gas. There's really been no benefits, they've lost their reserves entirely, and there were no jobs at all. I don't know that we'd even consider it.

My advice – just stay away.



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# MARLENE LIDDLE

HAIDA/MASSET

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MORE PEOPLE NEED THE OPPORTUNITY THAT I HAD OF GOING TO ANOTHER COMMUNITY TO SEE HOW THEY HAVE THEIR OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY SET UP. THAT WOULD BE AN EYE-OPENER FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE. THROUGH THE VISIT WE LEARNED ABOUT WHAT IMPROVEMENTS COULD BE MADE, HOW LONG IT TAKES TO IMPLEMENT THEM AND HOW THEY REALLY WORK. THAT'S THE TYPE OF INFORMATION WE NEED.

**M**Y NAME IS MARLENE LIDDLE AND I AM A BAND MEMBER ORIGINALLY FROM OLD MASSET. I now live in New Masset. I was elected to band council two years ago. I found my involvement with the university's oil and gas project was really interesting because there were so many communities sitting at the table. The one thing I kind of stayed away from was saying I am a member of this community or that community. I am from Haida Gwaii. I don't represent just one community because I don't really belong to just one community. I push my way into everywhere. I found that hard on the Community Guidance Group – although we did have community members, everybody seemed to have a huge political title attached. There were mayors and chairmen, this government agency and that government agency, and that kind of bothered me. But at the same time, who better than the elected officials to sit at the table because we are elected for a reason and that's to represent. Being part of the group helped me quite a bit. I didn't know what to expect, and it surprised me the rainbow of people we had, the differences we had in our backgrounds, our senses of humour. It was quite a lively group, and there were a few difficult discussions and a few heated words passed between people, but it was all brushed off quickly and we always got down to business. It was very valuable.

Over the past couple of years we've had a few universities come in with surveys or questionnaires and interviews. I think a part of the problem is our community has a tendency to avoid large subjects. People tend to want to stay in their cocoons, all warm and fuzzy, and don't realize there will be an impact during someone's lifetime. More people need the opportunity that I had of going to another community to see how they have their oil and gas industry set up. That would be an eye-opener for a lot of people. Through the visit we learned about what improvements could be made, how long it takes to implement them and how they really work. That's the type of information we need.

Back when there was first talk about oil and gas coming to the Queen Charlotte Basin, I took an interest in the topic. I started asking questions, asking people in my community what they had heard about the industry. I looked for any documentation around what has happened in the last twenty years. I started reading about it, and I took a great interest in learning what the positives would be, what the negatives could be, and what benefits our community could realize if the moratorium were lifted. So my take on the industry has always been when it happens, not if it happens. It may not happen in my lifetime, but I know oil and gas exploration will eventually come here.

This is for our children. Our other resources are depleted. On the water, there is no fishing. So we were trying to find out what kind of work in the trades would be available. We talked to students about careers

as biologists, heavy duty mechanics and other trades, all of which can be used around the oil and gas industry. And then we asked what kind of benefits there would be. We looked at the eastern provinces to see how they have benefited. When we took the trip to the East Coast, it seemed people were talking about the oil and gas industry in terms of the royalties and the benefits, and that's all I heard, and in the cities we saw the well-paved roads, the nice schools. But it was far different in the remote areas, where roads were just as crappy as they are here. The schools were the same as Haida schools. And the housing was poor and there was no farming, the same as here. There was no fishing and no logging, so kids grow up and go to the city because that's where the jobs are. You see a lot of that here too. I am happy the Haida have land title because that's a foot in the door at least. With consultation we have a better opportunity, more of a chance to further our positions with the provincial and federal governments on oil and gas, One of the things I liked out there was the way scientists and fishermen worked together doing studies around the oil and gas industry. I didn't like the way they had set up their revenue sharing, and I didn't see the jobs created that I had expected. There wasn't the job creation they thought there would be.

I believe that we will see oil and gas exploration and the industry here, maybe not in my lifetime, but eventually it will come. We need to be prepared. That's a long-term view, and it's difficult for First Nations because we don't have that stability. Most are single parents, many have drug and alcohol problems. They have been demoralized by being government controlled. Their fishing, hunting, logging, all the small industry here is just wiped out. I would support the oil and gas industry coming in and I would hope First Nations people would see that twenty or thirty years down the road, our kids' jobs may depend on this. They won't be hewers of logs or fishermen. The fishing industry isn't going to support our community thirty years down the road.

The lack of employment is the biggest challenge we have here. The Old Masset village council recently went bankrupt, and we're \$8 million in the hole. They laid off a bunch of employees about six months ago and I think it kind of scared the community. That has had a horrible impact, and as a businessperson myself, I've seen the effects. The mill is gone now, and the next biggest employer was the village council and that's been cut. It has been a huge blow to our community. Our community is devastated. Every single family has been hurt by layoffs. We now have 95 percent unemployment. One of the huge stumbling blocks is not having a real community development plan. We have a five-year, and a ten-year plan, and in the last two years we've done a lot of work, but then we had to cut back. Everybody is scrambling for the quick fix.

Another challenge is ensuring a sustainable harvest of our forest. One of the positive programs has focused along all the creeks, and logging alder which has grown up along the banks. The teams fall them, let them lie, and then plant spruce. There is money to be made there and there will be employment from that. We expect that could generate employment for around 40 to 50 members of our community. It wouldn't be a quick fix, but it would be sustainable over a long period of time. We also need to ensure that for all the work done here, there is Haida content in the contracts and Haida employees.

I don't see any economic benefits coming here locally from the oil and gas industry. The community is too small to accommodate anything needed by the industry. There are no restaurants, no grocery chain that provides supplies, and there is no anchorage here for a large ship. The airport could be used, but I see no real financial benefit to the community unless a few people coming to town visit a fishing lodge or some-

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I BELIEVE THAT WE WILL SEE OIL AND GAS EXPLORATION AND THE INDUSTRY HERE, MAYBE NOT IN MY LIFETIME, BUT EVENTUALLY IT WILL COME. WE NEED TO BE PREPARED.



thing like that. The community is just too small. I would like to see some of our children trained up in some of the skills that could be used in the oil and gas industry, but that may be asking too much.

At the same time, the oil and gas industry does concern me quite a bit because of the research I have done around the currents here. If there is an oil spill here it would stick in there forever and it wouldn't be just limited to a small area, like up in Alaska. It would be all up and down the west coast, from the Queen Charlottes all along the coast to the north end of Vancouver Island. All those areas would end up with oil on their shores. These are prime halibut fishing grounds for the Haida. This is where whales migrate, and it would devastate everything. I have heard about some of the safety measures, but it still doesn't satisfy my concerns.

Toxins would affect our clams, we wouldn't be able to consume them and that would be a huge downfall for our community. In the summer our beaches are full of people digging for the clams. Unless there is something to improve that type of product so that it is less harmful and the data gaps are filled, I don't think you would find anyone on the island comfortable with it.

I was born and raised here and I am very conscious of the environment and the risk of pollution. Even without the oil and gas industry, there is already pollution. I absolutely hate walking down the beach and picking up garbage all the time. I moved away from the community at nineteen and I lived in Ottawa and other places for twenty years, so I know the politics around the oil and gas industry, and I have traveled so I have been exposed to other areas. It really struck me when I moved back here, how nothing had changed. The town was the same size as when I had left. The school was worse off than it had been and the teachers were crappier than I remember them being in high school. I believe these issues affect everybody, not just this community.

My vision for the future of my community is to maintain that small town comfort. I would love to see a huge fishing lodge with a casino, where people could be flown in and they would go fishing and gambling for a few days. The sport fishing industry has kept many of our people working. It may not be the job everyone aspires to,

but it's a paycheck to feed their families. My vision would be to see First Nations people own the fishing lodges.

My message would be that my home is almost pristine, aside from the logging taking away a lot of the forest. Most of our forests are now second growth, and there is very little first growth left. Everything is gorgeous and I would hate to see that wiped out by a bunch of oil washing up on our beaches. The First Nations view is that the sea is our table. And to have an oil spill would be totally devastating. Everyone is depending on the Queen Charlotte Basin and if it could be one hundred percent guaranteed there would be no oil spill, we would be more comfortable. Because we are so dependent on the ocean for our livelihood, for our culture, we need a guarantee that our food supply – the crab, the halibut, the clams – will not be harmed. I would say again, though, that it is really just a matter of when the oil and gas industry comes here, not if. And we need to be prepared for that day.



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# BARRY PAGES

MASSET

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IT'S DEFINITELY A DIFFERENT WAY OF LIFE OVER HERE THAN ON THE MAINLAND. FOR EXAMPLE, TODAY WE'RE PRETTY FOGGED IN AND THE FERRIES AREN'T RUNNING AND THE PLANES AREN'T FLYING. BUT PEOPLE ARE USED TO IT. PEOPLE LOOK AT IT LIKE, IF YOU CAN'T FLY TODAY, OR MOVE TODAY, THERE'S ALWAYS TOMORROW.

**M**Y NAME'S BARRY PAGES AND I'M THE MAYOR OF THE VILLAGE OF MASSET, a fishing community on the north end of the Queen Charlottes/Haida Gwaii. I've worked in the aviation industry for the last fifteen years as well as being fairly active in the community – I've been on town council for twelve years. I lived on the Prairies for about five years during junior high school and starting high school, and then I came back and finished high school here. Other than that I was pretty much born and raised in Masset.

The Charlottes are quite a unique place with respect to the isolation and things like that. It's definitely a different way of life over here than on the mainland. For example, today we're pretty fogged in and the ferries aren't running and the planes aren't flying. But people are used to it. We get this kind of weather fairly regularly, so the island pace is fairly slow. People look at it like, if you can't fly today, or move today, there's always tomorrow. We're used to it. But that's why things like the hospital are so near and dear to everybody's heart, because there's times when you can't get off the island if you wanted to, so you need those kinds of services here.

Masset is still a fairly active fishing community – that's basically our main business right now. The greatest challenge we're facing right now is the unemployment. To address that I think we need to start doing more with our resources that are here and creating some more value-added jobs. Right now the majority of the resources go off the islands in the raw form. So that's what I'd like to see addressed here in the next little while. The islands are basically a resource extraction place, and because of that, there's not enough jobs created given the resources that are here, so we need to do more with what we've got.

The military base we used to have here was fifty percent of our local economy for about twenty-five years, but they pulled out in 1997. So our community's gone through quite a transition – selling the houses that were left behind, dealing with all that. But things have kind of stabilized here now with respect to people moving in and out.

My community's got lots of questions and concerns with respect to oil and gas, and I didn't know a lot about the industry, so that's why I got involved when UNBC phoned and invited me to participate in the NCIRP process, to try to learn a little more



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THE CAPITALS OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND NOVA SCOTIA SEEM TO BE DOING QUITE WELL, BUT THE RURAL OUTLYING COMMUNITIES DIDN'T SEEM TO BE DOING AS WELL. IF THAT'S AN EXAMPLE, I DON'T SEE A LOT OF BENEFITS COMING BACK TO SMALL COMMUNITIES HERE EITHER. ON THE FLIP SIDE, WE FACE A LOT OF RISKS IF IT DOES GO AHEAD. IT'D BE RIGHT IN OUR BACK YARD.



about it. I tried to go into it with a fairly open mind. I heard lots of stuff from both sides – pro and against oil and gas – but I tried to keep an open mind. I learned a lot. I thought the process was very worthwhile, all the communities getting together and discussing all the impacts and the industry in general. It was an eye-opener for me with respect to learning about the industry. The East Coast trip was the first thing I got involved with. I definitely learned quite a bit about the industry, so that's the main benefit, learning a bit more about what's involved, and of course the benefits of the process are that with more knowledge we can make better decisions. It definitely affected my opinions. There's still a lot of questions that need to be answered and I'm still not in favour of lifting the moratorium until those answers are there. I still believe the majority of the people in this community are definitely not in favour of lifting the moratorium at this time. There's obviously different opinions on both sides, but I think the majority of the community – I'd say it's at least eighty percent – are not in favour.

If oil and gas went ahead in the Queen Charlotte Basin, other than royalties going to the provincial government, it doesn't seem there would be a lot of benefits coming to the islands. That's one of my beefs, that the province basically hasn't come to the community and showed them what benefits could potentially come to the island. I don't see a lot of jobs and I don't see a lot of benefits coming here. If there is the potential for a lot of jobs to come here, I'd like to hear about them, but right now I don't see them. On the East Coast trip I noticed that a lot of the small rural communities are not thriving. They're declining. The capitals of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia seem to be doing quite well, but the rural outlying communities didn't seem to be doing as well. If that's an example, I don't see a lot of benefits coming back to small communities here either. On the flip side, we face a lot of risks if it does go ahead. It'd be right in our back yard. Our main concern is the environmental impacts – we don't know what the implications would be on the fishing industry, on the crab fishery. So there's a lot of questions with respect to that.

So I don't see oil and gas fitting in too much with the future vision of our community. Like I say, I don't see the benefits coming back to the island communities. Right now I'd like to see a more sustainable workforce, more sustainable industry with the renewable resources we have on island right now. We'd like a lot more input and dialogue with respect to the industry. We'd like more of our questions answered prior to any approvals going ahead.

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# DALE LORE

PORT CLEMENTS

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WE'RE A COMMUNITY THAT SIDED WITH THE COUNCIL OF HAIDA NATIONS, WENT TO COURT, INTERVENED ON THEIR BEHALF AGAINST THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, THINKING THAT AT LEAST THE PEOPLE WHO ARE LIVING HERE, NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE, WOULD BE ABLE TO MAKE THE DECISIONS.

**T**HE NAME OF MY TOWN IS PORT CLEMENTS. IT'S AN INTERESTING STORY how the town got its name. In 1911 there was an MP by the name of Clements, and there were three people vying to build a town: one was just down by Columbus Slough and it was called Queenstown; the other was called Graham Island Centre; and then there was this spot, Port Clements. Eli Tingley was trying to get this one as the town, so he made a deal with Herb Clements, the local MP. He said, if you give me a government wharf we'll name the town after you. I guess Mr. Clements wanted his name on the town, so that's where the wharf came from. It was built in 1911 by the federal government and the town was named after the MP. Just goes to show you, even back then it was how you greased the wheel.

It's an interesting place. It gets about seventy or eighty inches of rain a year. I came from the west coast of Vancouver Island, so I was expecting the Charlottes to be wet, but this is less than Vancouver. Our favourite saying is that it's quite a bit dryer here than in Prince Rupert because the wind is blowing so hard it can't land. It's basically a logging dependent community. We're down to about five hundred and seventeen people now. At the peak in '95, they had a booming six hundred and fifty. I think the biggest detriment to the town was when Weyerhaeuser bought the TFL [tree farm license] from MacMillan Bloedel in '99. And the second biggest detriment would be the provincial government, where they've eliminated the local cut control, and the various legislative changes they've made regarding forestry. It's just a ticking time bomb. We're a community that sided with the Council of Haida Nations, went to court, intervened on their behalf against the provincial government, thinking that at least the people who are living here, no matter who they are, would be able to make the decisions. Then we would be better off than if we keep letting people in cubicles in cities make the decisions about land they've never seen. I want to live here and I want to keep the resources that are around here too. That's what the province doesn't seem to understand.

Our biggest single problem here is we are in an excellent spot to fill up the coffers of the province. But, as you notice, nobody ever put anything back. And as we run out of resources, there is even more reluctance to do that. We are looking to expand some into tourism, but the big bread and butter is hopefully going to be a co-generation plant to be put in sometime in the summer in the industrial park. The town's plan is to take the hundred and fifty people working in the forest and the fifty people working in the industrial park and switch those numbers around. Once that co-gen plant comes in, we have free heat and you're at the source end of the electricity. The more miles you are away, the more chances wind is going to knock your power out. The theory is, if you have to pay to get rid of your wood waste and pay to transport it to the co-gen plant to get rid of it, and you have to pay to get your raw resource and pay to get it to your mill – if the



WE ARE ONE OF THE FEW PLACES THAT DECIDED TO KEEP FORESTS. WE WERE GOING TO REPLANT, HARVEST, WE WERE GOING TO HARVEST FOREVER, REMEMBER? BUT SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE WE NEGLECTED TO DO IT AT A RATE THAT WE COULD BE HARVESTING OLD MATURE TIMBER ALL THE TIME. THERE WAS NO END TO IT SO WE JUST HIT IT AS HARD AS WE COULD HIT IT.

raw resource and the waste disposal are both here, chances are that the milling is going to be here. We're trying to rebuild our milling capacity here to about 150,000 cubic metres. MacBlo never did have a mill here. In the good old days they used to float all the logs down to Vancouver. Now they're going to Salem, Oregon, and Bellingham.

Do you remember a mill in Vancouver called Canadian White Pine? They had been there over a hundred years, a great big mill. They cut the white wood from here. For years and years, when we looked for manufacturers, they'd say, Hey, you've got your union brothers down in the city, and they've got to have jobs too. When Weyerhaeuser bought MB, they even closed that mill. And the way the stumpage system works, you get the stumpage break for barging, no matter what. So when they changed all their laws, and when Weyerhaeuser started exporting all their wood straight to the States, nobody changed the stumpage rules. We're paying to ship the raw logs to the States. We're paying today approximately \$12.75 a cubic metre – of taxpayers' money. Here's the real irony. They're getting into big-time helicopter logging here now, which eliminates all kinds of local jobs. On top of that, there's a \$55 a cubic metre subsidy for helicopter logging, so if you heli-log and then ship to the States you're getting about \$7 a cubic metre more than the wood is worth on the local log market. So, in effect, we are paying them to take our wood. We're giving them money, plus the wood. We've tried to make it pretty public, but nobody wants to do anything about it. Maybe if you give hundreds of thousands to the premier's re-election, you get to do these things. But that appears to be what happened. That's basically it in a nutshell. This is a government much more friendly to corporations than it is to communities. We thought we were just electing a business government. But it's a government where, unless you had fifty thousand employees, they weren't talking to you.

I grew up in Tahsis on the west coast of Vancouver Island. There were about nine hundred people then, around two thousand when I left, and about six hundred now. Tahsis had two deep sea docks and quite a bit of infrastructure, more than we have here, but it was tied to the saw mill, and the pulp mill in Gold River. When they closed the pulp mill, that left no integrated forestry operation, so they closed that town. I lived in Tumbler Ridge and had some time in the mining industry, and then I left there and they closed that down. As I told the head of municipal finance last week when we were meeting with him over this financial situation we're having with Prince Rupert, we better get it right this time because my constituents were sending me to his community next!

I've seen what happens to towns with the boom and bust. I've seen the modern ghost towns of today, and I've lived in them. It's really not rocket science. It's real easy to figure out. If you've got plenty in resources, and if you don't figure out some other way than to cut down trees or excavate ore, if you do nothing else, eventually your town dies. It dies or it adapts. Something like nine out of every ten resource towns die, and one turns into a centre. Who knows which one? It depends on old Eli and whether he can get the ear of Clements. In Western Europe, most of the States, most of Canada, the forest was an evil. They got rid of the forest and made farmland. We are one of the few places that decided to keep forests. We were going to replant, harvest, we were going to harvest forever, remember? But somewhere along the line we neglected to do it at a rate that we could be harvesting old mature timber all the time. There was no end to it so we just hit it as hard as we could hit it.

I spent some time in Communist China after living in Tumbler Ridge teaching tank drivers how to be coal miners, which was lots of fun. And then I came here. I traveled quite a bit to Australia and to the south seas. This is the most interesting place I have ever been. I've been here eighteen years. I came on Valentine's Day 1987. It was the last place, of all the stories I had heard from my dad about him being up

north, and I had always wanted to follow in his steps, to see the country he saw. I don't know if it was so much that I liked it here or that there just wasn't anyplace else I wanted to go. I'm quite happy here. It's a really interesting place. There are no fence sitters here. Everyone has an opinion. They might be dead wrong, but they've got an opinion. It's not like in the city where you're afraid to say anything controversial for fear of the politically correct. Here, there's no room for people to do that. Everyone here is a very strong individual.

I've worked in the logging industry since I was a kid. My dad had a road building outfit, so I started when I was old enough to carry a lunch kit basically. I worked at the sawmill on the weekends until I got out of school. I probably should have gotten an education, gone on to a university. I've had a couple run-ins with bureaucracy over the years. My worst one was at thirteen when I was helping my dad build road. He was in Vancouver for the Truck Loggers Convention, and my brother was running a D8 Cat and I was blowing up a rock face on the side of the road, and this guy shows up wearing an orange hat and weird clothes as I'm just hooking up this blast. So I'm talking to him, and explaining, and he seemed quite inquisitive. So I go back to light off the fuse and the guy leaves. My dad comes back from Vancouver and there's registered mail there for him from the post office that says he's got to go down to Courtney, that there was trouble because he had a thirteen-year-old blasting, who was being supervised by a fifteen-year-old. They said the only reason why we're not locking you up is because the little bugger knew what he was doing. We were so young doing this stuff. It was a different sort of upbringing, where we didn't know anything about girls, or society and that sort of thing. I went straight into a fly-in camp after school, saved up \$20,000 in the two years and then I went traveling. And then I got civilized, if this is what you call civilized.

I came here for the work. I had a friend from Tahsis that had been here for about five years and raved about the place. So I put an application in, got a job, stayed with them for a while. I brought my wife up, and as soon as I got her up they cut my rate by a buck an hour, I guess because they figured I couldn't afford to move then. It took her about two years to get to like it. She's from Williams Lake and had never been near an ocean in her life. I promptly moved her down to a fishing lodge anchored down there, tied to the dock, where we got free rent for looking after the place. I remember I got home in a howling storm one time, and here is this girl from the interior telling me how she had tried to get groceries but just couldn't get off, and then about how she had gotten the groceries but couldn't get back on. If the winds were blowing the wrong way, it would just push it off the dock. But she got to like it here. I worked for MacBlo and they sold me to Weyerhaeuser, who couldn't get rid of me fast enough. Now I work for Edwards and Associates, but they subcontract me to Olympic. It's interesting. We build roads, laying the surface down on the subgrade the excavators have built.

I am not an opponent of resource extraction. I am an opponent of extracting the future for the present without any thought. I drive a Suburban. I'm not against oil and gas. I am against deciding to pick the most dangerous place I can find to drill for it. And I am against not doing any background studies and deciding, hey, we might do seismic. My initial position was pretty clear and really hasn't changed. I kept telling the province, you need at least two years of research, including baseline data. I said, put a research station up there, then you can start doing seismic. Other resources are the same way. All my life, I made my living in forestry, but go to the south end of the island and see this area with no more than fifteen to twenty trees



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THERE ARE NO FENCE SITTERS HERE. EVERYONE HAS AN OPINION. THEY MIGHT BE DEAD WRONG, BUT THEY'VE GOT AN OPINION.

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I AM NOT AN OPPONENT OF RESOURCE EXTRACTION. I AM AN OPPONENT OF EXTRACTING THE FUTURE FOR THE PRESENT WITHOUT ANY THOUGHT. I DRIVE A SUBURBAN. I'M NOT AGAINST OIL AND GAS. I AM AGAINST DECIDING TO PICK THE MOST DANGEROUS PLACE I CAN FIND TO DRILL FOR IT.

left, and they're all on Haida land, and they're called snags, and that's all that's left. You can't overharvest resources. All that does is build up money for down south. And then when the global village is finished with you, they don't even know what they've done, and you have nothing. So for me it's all about the sustainability of the resource. Harvest anything to the maximum that is sustainable with a cautionary approach.

There is currently an injunction from the Supreme Court telling the province and the companies they may not sell TFL 39 without consultation with the Haida. But we are actually having worse responses from the government since the Supreme Court justice told them they had impoverished the honour of the Crown. It would appear they think the victory is that the local people can't afford to pay \$100,000 for an injunction and that they can just sit there and ignore their defeat and pretend it's a victory. The one thing more and more people are becoming aware of is that if you are small and you can't out-vote people, and reason doesn't work, and the courts don't work, you're going to get to civil disobedience. According to the courts, any land that is encumbered with land claims is in the same sort of situation were are. Weyerhaeuser is talking about selling off the TFL, but they're talking about selling off one block here, and another there. I think they're going to run in a whole bunch of problems.

The one thing we have done here on the Charlottes – and I believe we were the first in the Dominion of Canada and North America – we were the first level of government to ever recognize aboriginal title before we gave them enough beads and trinkets to take it away. We're pretty good at recognizing things after the fact. But here, we looked at the situation and we say it's pretty obvious. We have the photography of when the white man came here. We have the pictures of the villages here. They were here, beautiful in comparison to where we came from, the little Scottish fishing villages or the stink of the industrial revolution. It was pretty impressive, like the cedar-walled Skidegate and the hundred or so totem poles along the beach. The first white community came here not really that long ago, in 1911. In 1903 we still had the missionaries tending to the Haida, while their friends were stealing the bones out of the graveyards and selling the bentwood boxes and artifacts at the same time. Things are a little fresher here. Back east, it's two hundred and fifty years ago and people can talk openly about it. But here, someone's grandmother told them the story. So it's all still very raw here, because people remember. It's not as easy to say, hey what's your bitch, it's all over now, we won. We didn't fight them. How do you justify whose land it is? I do know we're better off trusting the Haida. I mean I know they treat us better than we treated them. Our big saving grace is that the Haida never believed in land ownership. So I tell them, I would argue the land owns you. Our problem here is a stewardship problem. It's not an ownership problem. And we are way better off if it's the Haida's land than if it's the country's or the province's.



My initial problem with oil and gas was transportation. At the end of the day, I personally believe that 99.9 percent of the companies drill a hole and do a bang-up job of it. But I have huge problems with transportation of the product, especially considering our weather. And that issue isn't going away, given that they're talking about putting a pipeline into Prince Rupert from Alberta. It's been my experience, if you're bringing a million litres of oil a day through a port, you might be figuring on bringing a ship in. So I'm having an interesting time watching all this. It seems somebody is not telling the truth now. It would appear to me the First Nations in the area have to give an agreement before that is going to happen. The only livelihood most of these people have is life from the sea. How do you



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DESPITE THE FACT I THINK MY NAME WILL FOREVER BE LINKED TO OIL AND GAS, IT ACTUALLY RANKS AT ABOUT MY NUMBER FIVE ISSUE. IT'S NOT EVEN CLOSE TO THE TOP. IT'S IMPORTANT WE DON'T HAVE OIL ALL OVER THE BEACHES, DON'T GET ME WRONG. BUT IT'S NOTHING TO MY COMMUNITY AND THE ISLAND'S STRUGGLES WITH THE FOREST INDUSTRY, THE LAND CLAIMS, GETTING A NEW INDUSTRIAL PARK, BUILDING AN ECONOMY HERE THAT IS SELF-SUSTAINING.

not even talk to them and just cruise over with supertankers? From the legal perspective I don't see how they can do it. But they're not talking to anybody, not saying anything.

Despite the fact I think my name will forever be linked to oil and gas, it actually ranks at about my number five issue. It's not even close to the top. It's important we don't have oil all over the beaches, don't get me wrong. It's an important issue. But it's nothing to my community and the island's struggles with the forest industry, the land claims, getting a new industrial park, building an economy here that is self-sustaining. Those are way more important. I really didn't think the oil and gas issue was going anywhere. And then I got clued in, and I realized, they don't care. It's going to take fifteen to twenty years just to get it going, but once they got it going, it was a one-way street and it was going to be very difficult to turn it around. When the province and their lackeys went in and told us at the UBCM what they were going to do and asked for the support of local government, and then the premier comes in later and gives \$60 million to the organization, I was horrified. And I said so very publicly. I am a bit disappointed that I will likely be associated with that forever. I am not anti-development. But I am against the province taking away forestry and taking away the beaches and telling us to depend on tourism because we have nothing left. And get this, while we were busy with oil and gas, they changed the forestry rules and we didn't even notice. So in some ways, some of the reasons I didn't want to do this did come back to haunt me. This was a steep learning curve. We lived, breathed, ate, thought oil and gas for the better part of a year to come up to speed on it. And when you are doing that you don't have the time to be looking after your other traditional industries. It was a bit costly, but I am happy the next generation will make this decision. Technology will be better, oil will be more valuable. And we're not leaving our kids anything else. Would it really kill us to leave that?

In comparison to what the province wanted to do, I would say we won the battle on oil and gas. They were spouting off that oil and gas from the Hecate Strait would light the Olympic torch at Whistler. I can't believe that got the play it did. It's mentioned in Campbell's victory speech. It took them that much time just to sign the Atlantic Accord back east, just to get the jurisdictional stuff done. I look at it as a victory, and as a precursor to what is going to happen with the open net cages in the fish farming debate. That is one threat,



IT'S REALLY EASY TO DECIDE WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO IN SOMEONE ELSE'S BACK YARD. THE BIGGEST THING I WOULD LIKE PEOPLE TO RECOGNIZE IS THAT EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE AN EQUAL VOICE, AND IF YOU'RE GOING TO DO SOMETHING IN MY BACK YARD, COME AND TALK TO ME. IT'S JUST COMMON COURTESY.

above oil and gas, to life as we know it. Whether you are native or white, if you live on the coast, you are salmon people. You rely on the traditional seafoods and it's one of the reasons you live where you live. The sea lice problem is capable of wiping out a huge chunk of what we consider very critical habitat. It's the same thing we're worried about with oil and gas, only it looks like we can have it all wiped out a lot quicker with sea lice from fish farms. The people who are running the fish farms have reason to not want the salmon in the wild. So I am more worried about that one than the oil and gas.

With regards to the university's role in all of this, the stuff I heard about the university's Community Guidance Group from the politicians was that it was a waste of money. How did they ever take these people and show them these stupid things and get them doing it this way? I was amazed at the courage of the university, because it couldn't have been very long before they knew what we were thinking about this. I mean, when we came back from Newfoundland, we were horrified. We were absolutely horrified. And it wasn't the oil and gas that horrified us. It was the willful and planned killing of the coastal communities. It proved to us that oil and gas wasn't going to save us. There were around twenty of us going there to assimilate information, and then we went home and disseminated it. Almost every one came home with an opinion that just got stronger and stronger. We didn't go there with the idea of fucking up the oil industry. We didn't know anything about it. I still find it amazing the industry was so honest with us when government lies to us so bad. It's a risky business, and there can be no guarantee that bad things won't happen. We were told the industry automates as much as it can, so it's not a job creator. It's capital heavy with some good returns. It's not going to create jobs. The whole idea of it is to keep the human numbers very low. That's a fact. If there was one thing I have learned, it is not going to create jobs.

But the greatest advantage of the Community Guidance Group had nothing to do with oil and gas. The biggest advantage was that, for the first time in recorded history since we stopped traveling by canoes, we traveled to each other's communities, we ate at each other's houses, and we developed a network. We never did that before because of the cost of travel. You don't normally travel from Port Clements to Bella Coola to Alert Bay, but the fact is their way of life is way closer to ours than other places in BC. They opened their houses and their hearts. Towns like Port Hardy and Kitimat – they just happen to be on the coast. Some communities are really what I call coastal communities and others just happened to be plunked on the coast. I now have a way better understanding: if there is one thing we really need it is to have is a regional voice. We don't have that right now. The average person just has no idea of our way of life here. UNBC is the first to do community outreach, and to me, their coming out to understand our community is invaluable. If we can get our story out about what we need, that will help the next generation. That said, I think UNBC is still way too big cityish. Lots of people come up here and pick brains and pick brains and then leave. Every university in the province does programming here, but they never bothered to interact. Overall, UNBC seems to recognize there is something here, and they are asking what makes this place tick. But there's still is a massive distrust of intellectuals here.

One of the things people need to understand is they need to have enough courtesy to ask questions of the people who live here. Don't pull another UBCM, where mayors and councils are all saying, Oh yeah, let's have oil and gas at your back door, without really understanding the areas. The mayor of one of our neighboring mainland communities came here last summer on a fishing trip. She loved it. Later on she couldn't figure out why I'm against oil and gas. I said, don't you remember your fishing trip? It's really easy to decide what you're going to do in someone else's back yard. The biggest thing I would like people to recognize is that everyone should have an equal voice, and if you're going to do something in my back yard, come and talk to me. It's just common courtesy.

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# GILBERT PARNELL

HAIDA/SKIDEGATE

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THE HAIDA GWAII WATCHMEN WERE THERE TO ALERT THE COMMUNITY WHEN THERE WAS TROUBLE COMING. ORIGINALLY THEY WERE THE THREE FIGURES ON TOP OF THE TOTEM POLES. THEY LOOKED NORTH AND SOUTH, AND OUT TO SEA. SO THEY WERE CARETAKERS, PROTECTORS OF THAT VILLAGE AND ITS PEOPLE.

**M**Y NAME IS GILBERT PARNELL. MY HAIDA NAME IS HUNJAA-LAA-GUUSUUS. I come from Skidegate and my clan is Tsiits Gitnay Eagle Clan. Every Haida, when introducing themselves, says their clan name. I have three children, one in college and two in school right now. I'm originally from Masset. I spent my first eleven years in Old Masset and then I lived in New Masset for another ten years. I then went to Vancouver to college for a few years and moved back here and married a Skidegate girl. So this is my home.

I've been involved with Haida politics since I was a teenager and I've had various positions within the Council of Haida Nations: in communications, I've served as an executive assistant, and in elected positions. I've worked for Parks Canada in communications and interpretation, and with Stats Can census and post-census surveying. For the last couple years I've been chairperson for the Council of Haida Nations, attending all the quarterly meetings and the leaders' meetings. I play the role of master of ceremonies for many community functions, public events, burials, weddings. I've been a guide for many years, interpreting the Haida culture. Actually, cultural tourism is my passion. I started out as a young lad, as a Haida Watchman and tour guide, and worked with the sports fishing industry and other organizations that support tourism on the islands and I helped create the Haida Gwaii Tourism Association. For a number of years I was a policy analyst in tourism as well as other resource extraction industries. I was the co-manager of the Haida Gwaii land use planning process and LRMP and helped to design and negotiate the process for the land use planning process here on the island.

The Haida Gwaii Watchmen were there to alert the community when there was trouble coming. Originally they were the three figures on top of the totem poles. They looked north and south, and out to sea, and their purpose was to alert the owners of the house when there was trouble. So they were caretakers, protectors of that village and its people. In the early 1970s when there were concerns for looting from some of the ancient sites in the south, people here began going back to those old village sites. They were clan people who came from those



areas. They built accommodations and cleaned up around those villages and basically were caretakers. Then visitors started to come and they turned into hosts, explaining their history in what is now Gwaii Haanas. In the mid 1980s we became co-managers. To this day they are still there greeting visitors from all over the world.

The Haida Nation has an annual assembly where everyone who is elected is held accountable. My introduction to politics was when I got up as an angry teenager and I challenged the whole establishment and said, What are you talking about Haida youth, what do you know about youth? And I was challenged to

get involved, and I did. I guess I was groomed from a young age to care about our people. We have a council, which represents all Haida people, and their purpose is to settle the land question. They are elected. They have been striving for, as it says in our constitution, striving for sovereignty over ourselves and our lands, whether that be through treaty or through the courts. We also have a hereditary system with eagle and raven clans, which come from various regions of Haida Gwaii. Even though they live in one of the two communities of Masset and Skidegate, the two clans remain connected to their historical region of Haida Gwaii. Those two communities have their chiefs and council, as well as their hereditary chiefs, who serve much like a senate in the Canadian system. There is legislation passed, and before that it goes through a process of consultation with the people, where they decide whether something should go to a referendum or not, such as a treaty. They are basically a stopgap. There are checks and balances. So, each of those clans, the council of hereditary chiefs, and Council of Haida Nations are joined by the Skidegate and Masset village councils, who take care of municipal affairs. The Council of Haida Nations is elected to look after the laws of the land – they work on issues like education, health and business, economics – so all are connected. No matter where you are in the world, you are represented.

I have been very aware of how being Haida has shaped my people and me as a person. It's integral to my culture, land and

the completeness and wholeness of the land – and when I talk about the land I mean all the species that use or benefit from the land. There are many people here in Skidegate who still make their living off the water or from the forests. Our sustenance, our food, depend on all the resource in the sea and the forest, as well as in the ground. It sustains us as a people. The experiences, traditions and the ceremonies created out of the land and the experience of this land are what makes us who we are, which is the Haida people.

I'm a Haida first, no doubt, and I think every islander could say that, would say that, will say that. However, I am a proud Canadian, too. I cheer for Team Canada. I enjoy what Canada has to offer the world, but their dereliction of duty towards us and our nation annoys me. I think it's nothing but politics and big business and that's how government works. I think the average Canadian would like to reconcile the differ-



ences, go to work and prosper, live together and share. We have a shared vision here on the island. We never want to keep things to ourselves, but we want things to continue, so they have to be sustainable. My auntie has a saying: those who support us can stay, those who don't can leave. And it's as simple as that. I say 99.9 percent support the Haida. Over the years, relationships have been made, and there has been intermarriage with people here for decades. It's multigenerational and they share the same love and understanding for this place as I do, and how can I deny that to anyone in the world?

I think the main challenges come down to the policies of the governments of the day, the Indian Act, the provincial government and how they benefit from these islands as opposed to how people who live here benefit. There is a tremendous imbalance in how much leaves here, and the benefits that accrue, and to whom. Sure, we have some jobs, but we're seeing a lot of our resources extracted at an unsustainable rate, which will hurt us as a culture. Once we lose the trees, the salmon, we lose something special. So I really see the local effort to gain control and to manage our resources – that's Haida and non-Haida alike – as important, because we can see what works and what doesn't work. Having local control over extraction of resources would greatly increase our comfort level here.

I cannot see oil and gas development happening on the water. I just don't envision that happening at all. I think no matter what, the risks are too great. I think we need to wait until technology evolves and allows access not from the sea, but from the land – whether that's on Haida Gwaii or from land on the mainland. I really do not want to put any of the ocean environment at risk. And there is too much at risk even with seismic testing. There is a known risk and an unknown risk, and the one that really scares me is the unknown. I see too many examples on a daily basis all over the world of oil and gas going wrong, hurting the environment, with conflicts like Iraq, conflicts over this resource. I think there are so many other options available – wind, tidal and solar power, for example – but if we have to drill for fossil fuels it should be done on land. We will attempt to stop it by using the law and the courts. With recent rulings such as the TFL 39 ruling, where the courts said consultation and accommodation of First Nations regarding resource extraction has to be done, it's imperative that those governments follow what the courts have said. If it does go ahead, there would have to be revenue sharing, and a regulatory regime would have to be in place, with standards second to none. Whatever can be done to minimize the risk needs to be done because the environment is too important to hurt.

Internally, I know – because of the teachings of my culture, of my grandmothers and aunties, and my personal connection with the land – I know it's not right. What I learned on the trip to the East Coast was how people could benefit from the oil and gas industry by way of creating jobs, manufacturing science and research. I've seen how different user groups could build relationships to create more benefit and opportunities for local people. But I've also seen rural communities on the East Coast losing young people, where there is not enough activity, business or otherwise, to sustain them. There is a movement, because of the oil and gas, towards the large urban areas for jobs, and then there is neglect by provincial or other governments of those rural areas. They're going downhill. People are losing their culture during that rush to urban areas. They are losing that connection to the land. There are a lot of benefits through oil and gas, but also a lot of negative things. Every presentation out there was manipulated towards the positives of oil and gas. The only negative presentations about oil and gas that we encountered, we drummed up those presentations ourselves. So it wasn't a fair viewing of everything. It was unbalanced towards the people that were pro oil and gas. There were some people on the trip that thought, okay, the government paid UNBC \$2 million, this trip is sponsored by UNBC and funded by the government, so we'll see what the government wants us to see. When news first came out about this money being available to UNBC, Alex Hawley didn't

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I'M A HAIDA FIRST, NO DOUBT, AND I THINK EVERY ISLANDER COULD SAY THAT, WOULD SAY THAT, WILL SAY THAT. HOWEVER, I AM A PROUD CANADIAN, TOO. I CHEER FOR TEAM CANADA. I ENJOY WHAT CANADA HAS TO OFFER THE WORLD, BUT THEIR DERELICTION OF DUTY TOWARDS US AND OUR NATION ANNOYS ME.

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LET’S LOOK AT A  
GREAT WAY OF LIVING  
ON THIS EARTH.  
IT’S SO POSSIBLE,  
AND YET HERE WE  
ARE, LIKE A CAVEMAN  
DRAGGING A CLUB  
AROUND, WITH ALL  
THE TECHNOLOGY  
TO CREATE CLEAN  
ENERGY, AND WE’RE  
STILL ACTING LIKE  
CAVEMEN.

have a plan. But he came out here on a preplanning trip and I met him and from his words and personality I had a good feeling about the project. I’ve also known Norman Dale for years. Also knowing what the Northern Land Institute stood for, I kept my mind open. But I did see some influence from the provincial government. There were people from regional districts and various communities throughout the northwest that were there clearly for oil and gas, and they were going out there for backup information to support their views. I’m not going to be blindsided by any sort of process that supports oil and gas, I won’t allow that to happen. So I was going out there with a definite goal, which was to share information that I learned.

I also found the process and the networking excellent, and being able to talk and learn about oil and gas, to learn about the potential as well as learn about why it should not happen here. We were able to support each other, I guess, and through that networking we were able to share with our communities what was happening in that process, and to ensure the government was not just creating some consultation groups that were meaningless so that it could just forge ahead with its agenda. I felt there was a meaningful exchange of information. People understood where one another was coming from.

Another thing was you begin to see the commonalities in the economic struggles we’re facing as a region, and how, potentially, oil and gas could be viewed as a bright spot to boost economic activity in the region. But I didn’t get that message from being back east. I see maybe an urban area benefiting economically, but I don’t see rural areas, what we represent, benefiting. I saw other things that emerged through the CGG process too, such as looking at the region as a whole and looking at the potential to network on other opportunities aside from oil and gas, and the opportunity to share some fruitful ideas of how networking could be continued through community development or tourism. We looked at all aspects of the region, the economics of the region as a whole from a variety of interests and got to discuss and bounce plans off each other. I’m still in contact today with people from that process.

I guess I’m kind of biased in that regard. The university is working in partnership with the Skidegate council, where I was an elected member and I held the portfolio of education. I have always been proud of the fact it is the university of the north, located in the north, and represents the north’s interests. I think I was glad UNBC got the research contract as opposed to others, so it would be perceived as working for the people of the north, in the region. Experts from Victoria, Vancouver and Ottawa come up here and tell us what to do or design processes all the time, but they don’t understand how we think here, and how we work and our protocols. It’s got to be local.

I think the message I can share, which I believe has been shared for thousands of years, is that we’ve got to treat Mother Earth with respect. In this day and age, sustainability should be the key, and we shouldn’t wipe out resources. We should be connected in a manner that will yield many more years of sustenance. Let’s start pushing alternative energy. Let’s look at a great way of living on this earth. It’s so possible, and yet here we are, like a caveman dragging a club around, with all the technology to create clean energy, and we’re still acting like cavemen.



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# MELINDA PICK

HAIDA/QUEEN CHARLOTTE CITY

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BECAUSE OF DISCREPANCIES IN THE OWNERSHIP OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES WE HAVE NOT ALWAYS HAD A VOICE AROUND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ISSUES. FOR YEARS WE HAVE SEEN OUR RESOURCES LEAVE HERE IN ASTRONOMICAL PROPORTIONS WITH VERY LITTLE BENEFIT TO OUR ISLANDS BEYOND A TWO WEEK PAYCHEQUE.

My name is Melinda and I was born and raised on Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands). My mother is Haida and my father is Lithuanian. I am an eagle woman from the Gitans clan of Old Massett. I grew up in Massett and I have also lived in Port Clements and Sandspit and I have lived in Queen Charlotte City for the past thirteen years. Queen Charlotte City is a small town centrally located at the south end of Graham Island. The population is approximately one thousand and people are employed in forestry, fishing, government offices, retail shops and other small businesses.

My grandmother, Nanny Katie, taught me to take pride in my ancestry, and although I do not yet have my Haida name I am very proud to say I am of Haida descent. I believe that as Haida people we are the rightful owners of Haida Gwaii, and with that comes the responsibility to treat the land and surrounding waters with respect. It has been very difficult to do as we have not always been involved at the policy making levels. Many First Nations people have inadvertently taken part in the exploitation of their own resources while trying to make a daily living. Because of discrepancies in the ownership of land and natural resources we have not always had a voice around resource management issues. For years we have seen our resources leave here in astronomical proportions with very little benefit to our islands beyond a two week paycheque.

I have been self-employed in the forest industry for the past seventeen years. I have business partners and together we own a small logging company which has contracted to MacMillan Bloedel in the past and presently contracts to Weyerhaeuser. I have witnessed first hand the unsustainable rate of logging here on Haida Gwaii. I am not anti-logging, but great changes will have to take place here to ensure a future for our children. We need to start incorporating traditional and local knowledge with resource management practices. Our ancestors lived here in great numbers for thousands of years and used trees for ceremonial and cultural purposes. They lived in respect and harmony with nature. There is much to be learned from the past.

I love Haida Gwaii and would like our children to be able to carve argillite and cedar and weave cedar and spruce roots, speak the Haida language, and also be able catch a wild salmon for the next meal. I believe these are the inherent rights of Haida children. I am willing to do whatever it takes to make sure their voices and the voices of those yet unborn are heard. When decisions are made today they will directly affect our future generations. I would like to extend an invitation to all policy makers to come here and meet our



children and get to know who we are and what our values are. We need to be involved at the policy making levels.

I was fortunate enough to work for UNBC on their oil and gas research project. I was hired on a contract basis as the Haida Gwaii Communities Liaison for the Northern Coastal Information and Research Program. I was asked to join the Community Guidance Group as part of this contract. I made a personal commitment to myself and to the people of Haida Gwaii that I would take part in the gathering of information necessary to make an informed decision about whether or not people want to see oil and gas exploration take place in our waters. I will admit when I first heard the words “oil and gas exploration” I was filled with fear. Part of that fear was based on my ignorance, so I have been trying to learn as much as possible about all aspects of oil and gas development. As part of that learning I had an opportunity to travel to Newfoundland and Nova Scotia with several other CGG members.

I was also invited to attend BCAFC meetings on offshore oil and gas and attended a Seismic Workshop and the Offshore Mechanics and Arctic Engineering Conference. I was asked to give a presentation as a Haida citizen at a 2004 Spring Symposium (“Petroleum Exploration in the Queen Charlotte Basin: The Issues”). As part of my presentation I read four essays written by my son Calvin’s Grade 7 class. Their class had done a section on the possible development of the oil and gas industry in the Queen Charlotte Basin. It was evident to me when reading those essays that they had a very good understanding about the complexity of the issues. I would like to share their wise words with you. (I included the one written by Shawn Baggely because it has brought some light and humor to a serious issue.)

**“Offshore Oil and Gas Exploration” by Calvin Pick**

*People are wanting to drill in approximately fifteen years. They want to look for oil on the Hecate Strate. The weather there is just too bad. There is an average thirty foot wave on the Hecate Strate. The Hecate Strate is the tenth roughest piece of water in the world. I think it should be illegal to even sail loaded oil tankers on that strip of water. If they did drill on the Hecate Strate we could lose more money than we would make. The drilling could affect and harm some marine animals. Of all the animals some could be undiscovered like legends such as the Ogopogo and the Lochness monster or even the Giant Squid. Some people claim to have seen some of these legends but there is not enough proof that they actually exist. We could make animals extinct without even discovering them. It is said that the great explorers and divers of the world have only discovered one percent of the ocean floor so it is almost certain that there are animals that are undiscovered in the deep blue sea. All in all I think that drilling there is a horrible idea.*



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**“Oil Drilling Near QCI” by Marissa Davies**

*I think that there should be more research done before they actually decide to drill the oil from offshore. This is extremely important because one little mistake could drastically change the environment from animals to the blue sky. If we research more we can find more ways to secure a healthy environment while drilling oil offshore. I would say yes to the oil drilling but there are, as the first report said, some potential concerns. There are many serious concerns like people who are drilling the oil and the environment’s health. They also have to consider thinking of the sponge reef and other endangered and threatened animals and plants. We need to take care of our animals for once they are extinct, they are gone forever. Some reasons for my decisions are, for one, they need to be extra careful to make sure the environmental hazards do not take place. Also because this is an important decision and it must not be taken lightly, and just decided right away. But most of all this oil drilling business should be looked at very carefully and closely. Also, I think if we treat the environment with respect and get the oil as well, we can have a better economy and also have a healthy environment as well.*



**“Oil and Gas Exploration in the Hecate Strait” by Alan Moore**

*Drilling for oil off the Queen Charlotte Islands is not worth the consequences. Many fish and other animals would die, and we still wouldn’t get oil for fifteen years. By the time that oil will be beginning to produce, the 2010 Winter Olympics will be the distant past, there will be a new government, and the kids who are in grade 7 now will be 27 and 28, and putting themselves through college. For this current government, which is losing money, to spend its remaining cash so it can instantly hurt the environment, but have to wait fifteen years before the funds start coming in would be extremely senseless. They would be wasting their time, and millions of dollars, for the 2019 cabinet to collect. They would also be losing money through the fishing industry. If the provincial government means to keep control over British Columbia, they had better not lift this moratorium. To remove the ban on oil and gas exploration would be, possibly, the fatal blow for a party already struggling for survival. Unfortunately for us, and the BC Liberals, the moratorium will probably be lifted. Ladies and gentlemen, bid a fine farewell to the Provincial Liberal Party, because they are on their way out!*

**“Oil & Gas” by Shawn Baggely**

*I think that the federal government has the right to uphold the operation of the hecatat strait, not only will it create jobs, but establish a higher ranking economy in the great race that is the oil trade. It may hurt the little sponges but with all the money, we can just buy more sponges and put them in the hecatat strait. Eventually the oil would be uncovered anyway. If you don’t like the idea of oil being harvested then buy less McDonald’s burgers and other plastic products. All the dead stuff either turn into oil or bones anyway. I think that it is important we get the money so we can buy peacekeepers to stop our war-like brothers (the Americans) from shooting everybody with missiles. Besides I don’t see what’s so exciting about a living sponge; you can’t wash dishes with it, it’s not going*

*to talk to you, you can't teach it to fly, and you can't eat it. I think everyone has enough sponges anyway. If the hekat strait is so stormy and watery and wet then it's not like we can go see the sponge things anyway. Besides what have those sponges done for us lately anyway, its not like you can make medicine out of them. So, I say we sell oil, buy sponges, and stop our American friends from blowing countries up.*

I would also like to share with you my abstract for the presentation. It was actually written by Erika Rolston, another CGG member. She is truly gifted and helped me out by magically transforming our many lengthy conversations into a short summary. Thank you Erika! This is one example of the networking and support system we have started and will continue to build on as time goes by.



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#### **Haida Concerns**

*'When the tide is out, our table is set.' Many elders of many First Nations have echoed these words. This reflects very strongly on the value systems of many islanders, indeed many people of Coastal BC. Wealth and success cannot always be measured by dollars; sometimes the abundance of seafood from a successful net can generate more wealth than any size of bank account. Many locals who engage in sustenance harvesting are very concerned about ensuring the continuity of the islanders' seafood harvesting tradition. Add to those the many families whose financial health depends on the health and integrity of the environment that is growing these resources. As the members of these households can testify, there are already troubling signs of the pressures that human activities are putting on the marine resources. This brings up many difficult questions about the wisdom of contributing further to greenhouse gas emissions through extraction of a non-renewable resource, rather than better using the abundance of renewable resources that we already have in BC. In this context, it is easy to see why many islanders fear and reject a large industrial development like the oil and gas industry, with all of its risks. There are many unknowns about the oceans and our impacts on them for islanders to be comfortable to trade the bounty they still have for the possible benefits of an unknown and potentially disastrous industry. We live on Haida Gwaii because we were born here and/or choose to be here. It is not a lifestyle for everyone but the islands are undeniably pristine. They deserve the respect necessary to offer the level of protection that is needed to ensure future generations will share in the abundance of resources from the sea around us and the land we live on. Our ancestors are watching what choices we make and our descendants will have to live with them. These values are priceless.*

I had the pleasure of taking part in making arrangements for the Haida Nation to meet with two incredible women hired for the First Nations engagement process, which was part of the federal government's review of the moratorium on offshore oil and gas activities in the Queen Charlotte Basin. I believed that Cheryl and Zoë could provide a direct link to Ottawa, therefore making it possible for the policy makers to get to know us and ensure our values would be taken into account when decisions are made about things that would directly affect our way of life and the homeland we share. I made sure they paid a visit to our beautiful beaches and shared with them our precious seafood.

I really enjoyed being a part of the CGG and getting to know other people from around the Queen Charlotte Basin. One thing we noticed about working so closely with one another was the trust level went

up considerably when we shared food during our lengthy discussions. So, again, I would like to extend an open invitation to all policy makers: please come and visit with us, share our wonderful seafood and allow us to be part of the decision making process.

The networking that has been established, through the CGG, between our communities will be our strength as we move forward in exploring the possible development of yet another resource-based industry. The need for involvement in policy making decisions at the grassroots level cannot be underestimated. If we look around at the dire consequences the historical management of our sustainable resources, we must ask ourselves: “do we want the same experts making choices for us about the extraction of a non renewable resource?” Not only is oil and gas a non-renewable resource, but exploration and development could devastate our seafood supply; the potential for environmental damage is a risk many are not willing to take. We need to think locally and not let global interests impact our way of life any more than necessary.

In closing I would like to thank the provincial government for giving the funding to UNBC to allow the facilitation of the NCIRP. I would also like to say thank you to everyone who made it possible for me to get off to a fine start on gathering the best information on offshore oil and gas. And last but not least, thank you to all the CGG members. What an honor it was for me to spend time with such an amazing group of people. Thank you for sharing so much of yourselves; it was truly a pleasure getting to know each and every one of you. Thank you for all your kindness and understanding as we probed so many issues together. I am sure we will work together again.



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# NORMAN DALE

NCIRP PROGRAM MANAGER/PRINCE GEORGE

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I HAD JUST FINISHED A MORE OR LESS LOSING BATTLE TO HAVE THE EXTENSIVE LAND USE PLANNING THAT WAS IN PROGRESS ON THE CENTRAL COAST CONVERTED INTO A MORE COMMUNITY-ENGAGING AFFAIR. THUS, FRESH IN MY MIND WERE THE VERY COMPELLING REASONS WHY NCIRP SHOULD PUT COMMUNITIES AT CENTRE STAGE IN THE UNFOLDING PROGRAM.

I WAS HIRED TO MANAGE THE OVERALL NORTHERN COASTAL RESEARCH AND INFORMATION PROGRAM (NCIRP) in October 2002, about five months after the public announcement of the \$2 million grant. To do this I had to move, ironically, from a community that actually counted among those in the relevant coastal geographic region to the inland locale of Prince George. My presumption was that I'd got this job largely because of my long and grassrootsy career among coastal First Nations and other small towns and villages of the catchment area – three years on Northern Vancouver Island, three years on the Charlottes and five in Bella Coola. I had just finished a more or less losing battle to have the extensive land use planning that was in progress on the Central Coast converted into a more community-engaging affair. (I refer here to the Central Coast Land and Coastal Resource Management Plan (CCLCRMP) process, which began in 1996 with avowals that it would centre on the residents of the region, but which quickly evolved into a sequence of meetings held more often than not in Richmond, BC and involving almost always more non-residents than locals. This was only to some degree corrected when Phase II of the CCLCRMP commenced in 2002.) Thus, fresh in my mind were the very compelling reasons why NCIRP should put communities at centre stage in the unfolding program.

In that regard, however, there was already the problem of time pressure – a problem the program faced from start to finish and which was never satisfactorily resolved. I soon realized that UNBC was already feeling under the gun to get on and do something tangible with the substantial grant from the government of BC, a situation that got far more critical by spring 2003, as I shall presently recount. The announcement of the NCIRP grant had come back in April and, with Christmas at hand, a sense of urgency to “get on with it” was growing. My concomitant worry almost from day one was that the analytical research side of things would get so far ahead of community collaboration as to negate the validity of any claim that this program would be “community-driven”.

My concerns proved to be well-founded. The “phase one” research – which turned out to be the only phase – got well underway before the planned mechanism for community engagement took shape. This meant that NCIRP was always playing catch-up as it tried to be authentically “community-collaborative”; without meaningful involvement in framing research priorities, communities and community folk are not truly engaged as full partners in a research endeavour. The question was often asked: Why didn't community engagement start earlier in NCIRP? The answer to this question, one that haunts me to this day, comes from two factors: the inherent, always under-estimated challenge of creating a committee that reflects the diversity of coastal communities; and the time pressures on NCIRP, ones that changed dramatically in the early months of 2003.



NCIRP's initial work plan, prepared in September 2002, called for an "advisory mechanism" with community representatives. Ah, the superficial simplicity of that notion! We quickly trashed the word "advisory", as communities of the BC coast have had more than they ever want to see again of relationships in which they are deemed to be mere advisors on matters that affect them more than anyone else. So although UNBC was not about to delegate full governance of its research program to communities, we preferred terms that invited a more proactive, respected and authoritative role than what is connoted by "advisory".

The word that came to my addled mind was "guidance" which, like most any word, really, carries a lot of associations. The most germane, however, was the idea of a guide, someone who knows the "lay of the land" and can help others less familiar navigate the terrain. Of course, when the group was assembled some months thereafter, other associations of the term "guidance" were sources of grumbling. Who do we think we are, some would ask, to presume to be "community guides"? But we never did find a better adjective to attach to the generic noun "group" and so it stuck.

What was far more problematic, and like all interesting challenges, never fully resolved, was just how one establishes a committee inclusive of all relevant interests and perspectives but not unmanageable in its numbers. Common sense suggests that having more than a dozen members on such a working group begins to get troublesome logistically and in other ways. At first we framed this challenge as how (and who) the group members could best "represent" communities of place. But that was an even naughtier (and knottier) word than "advisory". Bear in mind that, while UNBC espoused neutrality on the outcome of ongoing decisions about whether to proceed with offshore oil and gas, the funding derived from a provincial government whose support for development was never ambiguous. Thus when we communicated with the communities of the coast – many of which were and still are intensely skeptical of offshore oil and gas – claiming objectivity but with our funding supplied by proponents – well, suffice it to say that the incline up Mount Credibility was indeed sheer!

The problem was especially ominous for First Nations, and took the form of the omnipresent fear that just about any form of involvement, however indirect, could be labeled adequate consultation in some future

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court proceeding. The same, if somewhat less well-defined, fear exists among small non-Native fishing communities who have so often seen pathetically minimal contact with a government initiative, and then later had that contact deemed sufficient public participation. (A prime example was the so-called Mifflin Plan, perpetrated by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in 1996 after several years of extensive and badly-designed interactions with fishing and community folk of the BC coast.)

We carried this onerous baggage into preliminary discussions in many communities in late 2002 and early 2003. It soon became apparent that striking a “representative” guidance group was just not going to hap-



pen. Key decision-makers were too leery of our sponsor’s avowed support for offshore development and of the possibility that, notwithstanding disclaimers to the contrary, involvement would be construed as consultation. Meanwhile the runaway train of our own research gained momentum, spurred on by the increasing urgency from within the provincial bureaucracy to show product.

A brief aside may be useful to illustrate the changes occurring outside the Queen Charlotte Basin region that caused a palpable shift in the pace that UNBC felt obliged to follow. As late as November 2002, there was a sense that we would move no faster than sound community-based planning would permit. Then the Province established its Offshore Oil and Gas Team in January 2003. They were tasked with getting the offshore oil and gas ball rolling and would now be the provincial representative to whom NCIRP reported. The team was pretty motivated, but got even more zealous when, in March 2003, the federal Minister of Natural Resources acceded to BC’s urgings to re-open consideration of the moratorium. The Honourable Herb Dhaliwal launched a multi-pronged review process (scientific, public and First Nations) that got underway later in 2003 and continued on in to 2004. The three initiatives were chaired respectively by Dr. Jeremy Hall, Mr. Roland Priddle, and Ms. Cheryl Brooks.

The indirect but soon-felt impact of this move was that the BC Offshore Oil and Gas Team put an even higher priority on having their own funded processes move speedily towards completion. It became clear that we were not moving as fast as some would have liked. But many if not most communities would not or could not accelerate their steady but slow learning and decision-making about offshore development. This was the veritable rock and a hard place – NCIRP felt increasing pressure to “get on with it” (it being the “real goods” of research) while the difficulty of sensitively creating the guidance group became ever more obvious.

During the summer of 2003, I developed some draft terms of reference for a guidance group and decided to try to circumvent the quandary of “representativeness” by using a distinction that I learned several years before from Dr. Hal Saunders of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation. Saunders had pioneered an intriguing approach to ethnic conflict resolution called “sustained dialogue”. (For more on this, see Dr. Saunders’ book, *A Public Peace Process*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1999.) The idea he’d implemented in a number of massively difficult settings of cross-cultural conflict (e.g. Israel-Palestine, strife-torn former Soviet republics) was to assemble people from warring factions not to represent (i.e. speak for) their communities but rather to as accurately as possible reflect the views and factions therein. This became a principle in the formation and practice of what would become the Community Guidance Group (CGG). No one would speak for anyone but each would bring her or his very important perspective and background to bear on whatever items the CGG dealt with.

This and the keen, community-spirited nature of so many coastal residents led to an amazing one hundred percent “yes” response to invitations we sent to about fifteen people around the basin in September 2003.

At about the same time, the consultants we'd hired to do the research on the "state of knowledge of community and socio-economic implications of offshore oil and gas" were beginning to plan a field visit to eastern Canada which, by their contract terms, would bring along a delegation of Queen Charlotte Basin folks. We called it a study tour. It was natural, as they sought to pick a community delegation, to look to the membership of the newly-minted CGG. In the course of firming up this delegation at rather short notice, some CGG members with schedule conflicts named alternates for the East Coast trip, and the consultants had some other people picked out as well for various reasons.

The significance of this excursion to the composition and spirit of the CGG is not to be underestimated. In terms of composition, when the CGG later convened for its first real working sessions in Port Hardy in December 2003, they made a strong recommendation, quickly accepted by NCIRP, that every person who had been on the East Coast trip be extended a CGG invitation. No less important was the esprit de corps that arose among those who'd gone east by virtue of having spent seven intense days together arguing and learning about Atlantic Coast hydrocarbon experiences.

The invitations I sent out in September went to individuals who had either stood out in contact with the fledgling program since its earliest outreach efforts in mid to late 2002 or whom I knew from my years of working on the coast. I had (and have) no apologies for this selectivity when the inevitable criticism came from various quarters – the raised eyebrow question, "How did you pick them?" The fact is, putting together a workable group from a region as diverse and fractionated as the so-called Queen Charlotte Basin is utterly quixotic. If all relevant interests and commentators had to be happy with the selection, we'd still be selecting! My criterion was and is a far gentler one, especially since I can now apply it in hindsight: were the people we appointed likely to be able to achieve cordial and cooperative working relations that would constructively improve our program, notwithstanding the diversity of their views and backgrounds? In that, I believe, we succeeded, and more.

As mentioned, an initial draft terms of reference (ToR) was included in the invitations sent out to prospective CGG members in September 2002. I've attached the circulated draft to this story, but should add this rather important and curious fact: they were never adopted. The group made a few attempts at revisions, additions and the like, but ultimately shied away from formal ratification. Why? Naturally, it was hard to reach agreement on some issues, as is inevitable in any group of such heterogeneous make-up. But I think (or like to think) that our collective reluctance to finalize the ToR was really an appreciation for the unprecedented and, for all, uncertain new paths we were striking out on.

Contemporary to the formation of the CGG, a host of organizations formed around the offshore oil and gas issue. Most of these organizations, however, were specifically organized as opponents or proponents of development. Indeed, our group included folks who were part of these more single-minded initiatives. But, as a collectivity, we were something quite different. At one table, over shared meals, buses and wildly turbulent air flights, we included people from most any conceivable viewpoint. Along the way, some of the group began to speak of the CGG being a "bias balanced" entity. Few in our midst were without an opinion – I can attest to that as the meeting facilitator! But respect for this diversity and a shared commitment to see their communities empowered in whatever decisions were to be made brought and kept the group together. Thus, it became useful not to finalize and formalize terms of reference, but

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rather to have their incompleteness remain something of a symbol of, and certainly a challenge to, the never-ending quest for common ground in a context rife with differences. In that sense, like the idea of “living treaties” that once had its day in the discussion of Native land claims, we had “living terms of reference” in a state of perpetually being perfected! (Back in the mid 80s, the federal government established a task force to review its “comprehensive claims policy”. That committee’s final report was called Living Treaties, Lasting Agreements and reflected to a degree a wise recognition - now not always remembered – that there is no real “finality” to arrangements among human beings and communities but, at best, a constant striving for mutual understanding and understandings.)



The CGG met a total of six times and managed to do so in most corners of the Basin region. I am delighted to say “thank you” and pay tribute to others who got stuck with the far less fun jobs of getting CGG participants to and from our meeting places. For that, Kathy Scouten, Peggy Crough, and Ann Godon are to be effusively credited along with local CGG members in each community. Our very first and largest gathering was at the Airport Inn in Port Hardy in December 2003. This followed six weeks or so after the East Coast study tour which, while not formally a CGG occasion, breathed first life into the nascent group. The Port Hardy session was coordinated by the Prince Rupert Community Fisheries Development Centre, which also organized our second session in Terrace in February 2004. The Port Hardy kick-off was facilitated by John McCandless from North Vancouver, but thereafter I took over both in-meeting facilitation and substantive planning of gatherings. The Port Hardy session covered an enormous number of topics, including the beginning of the spirited debate over role and identity that precluded fine-tuning and adopting the draft terms of reference. Terminology and semantics – which, contrary to common opinion, really do matter – were hotly-debated, including the words “community” and “guidance” in all their complexions and shades.

As indicated, we met again in Terrace in February 2004 – a last minute switch from Kitimat where some issues still needed ironing out with the Haisla Nation. That meeting was perhaps most notable for being the birthplace of an idea to prepare a “layperson’s guide” to the soon-to-be-released Royal Society Report on BC Offshore Oil and Gas. Our group anticipated a need for a less-technical and everyone-friendly version of this pivotal document and set in motion the process that led quite soon thereafter to preparation of NCIRP’s first public document, “Under Currents 1: A Citizens’ Guide to the Royal Society of Canada’s Report of the Expert Panel on Science Issues Related to Oil and Gas Activities, Offshore British Columbia” ([www.unbc.ca/nlui/ncirp/undercurrents\\_1.html](http://www.unbc.ca/nlui/ncirp/undercurrents_1.html)).

Two more meetings were held in the late winter and early spring, one in Kitimat, where further work was done on the CGG’s inputs to emerging research projects, and one in Bella Coola, with a focus on fine-tuning some desirable projects for enhancing community understanding of and role in decisions about offshore development. Alas, by the time the group had come up with some pretty exciting projects which it could have taken the lead on, NCIRP’s coffers were running too low. The CGG had winnowed down many possibilities to produce what now could only be a menu, rather than the feast itself! The following were the “finalists” in this sensitive identification of priority action-projects:

- A COMMUNITY INFORMATION FAIR that would travel through Basin region communities providing, under one roof, differing perspectives and up-to-date information on offshore and other energy choices.
- A YOUTH EDUCATION STRATEGY designed to provide the generation that would live most with any offshore development with solid and balanced educational materials about the choices, technologies and issues.

- A CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO OFFSHORE DECISION-MAKING, to cut through the fog of multiple jurisdictions, laws, regulations and the like so that average people could (a) understand and (b) see how to best get involved in the unfolding of this issue.
- AN ABORIGINAL AUDIO-VISUAL PROJECT ON OFFSHORE OIL AND GAS that would ensure access to information in the indigenous languages and communication forms of the region.
- BASIN-WIDE CONFERENCING, using (possibly) the Future Search approach, to convene community members from Alert Bay to Haida Gwaii and over to Kitimat to deliberate together on the future of their region in light of offshore development.
- PLANNING OF (FURTHER) STUDY TOURS to other places well-experienced with offshore oil and gas (e.g. Cook Inlet, Alaska, the North Sea, the Gulf of Mexico).

Personally, I regret the fact that money, or lack thereof, precluded the CGG going forward with these initiatives; they were well-formulated and grounded more than any other conceivable NCIRP project in the real needs of the region's communities. Most could have been done for a small fraction of what some of the other elements of NCIRP cost. But, these projects have not been totally relegated to the dusty shelves of unfulfilled possibility. In the months since the CGG came up with these ideas, other groups, including ones that include former CGG members, have started a variety of projects and have, to varying degrees, adapted and built on the priorities that came out of Kitimat and Bella Coola in early 2004.

The group went on to convene an especially enjoyable think-tank in Port Clements in July. That gathering was primarily devoted to testing out the Future Search approach by having the CGG run through the several phases of such conferencing. We called these planning sessions "Whither or Wither?" and focused on what the group could evolve towards. It was an immensely constructive and creative session stimulated no doubt by the environs: an old multi-purpose coastal working boat formerly known as the Sampson IV and now owned by the Langara Lodge. Except for local CGG members, everyone lived right on board and adapted well to the eccentric meeting space. Among the extra-curricular highlights was Mayor Dale Lore's chivalrous retrieval of a \$20 bill from the intertidal muds and his collaborative lead in a most memorably tasty barbecue!



As with the two previous sessions, this future-oriented planning was done in the long shadow of impecuniousness. Essentially we worked as if the future might hold possibilities for funding implementation, but realistically conscious that no benefactor was in sight. Despite this gloomy fiscal landscape, the CGG not only laid down a way forward that can and should serve posterity, but affirmed, almost unanimously, the commitment of its membership to continue on and "grow" their assemblage into a force to be reckoned with in any offshore scenario.

The last gathering – so far – of the full CGG took place at Alert Bay in September 2004. That two-day session included one day to take stock of the group's accomplishments and to prescribe small, realistic next steps (including doing this volume) and one day with NCIRP's Scientific and Technical Advisory Group. After

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IF OFFSHORE DEVELOPMENT IS FURTHER PURSUED, I HOPE THOSE WHO MAKE THE BIG DECISIONS – AND THOSE WHO END UP WITH THE FUNDS AND THE PRIVILEGE AND RESPONSIBILITY TO DO RESEARCH IN THIS INCREDIBLE CORNER OF THE WORLD – TURN TO THE DOCUMENTED LEGACY AND ALSO TO THE ALUMNI OF THE COMMUNITY GUIDANCE GROUP FOR – WELL, YES, GUIDANCE, IN EVERY SENSE OF THAT WORD.



some very good talk and some very good eating, we disbanded and headed for our dispersed home communities, no less uncertain about the future of the CGG than the rest of BC is about offshore oil and gas itself.

And now it's time to wind up this winding and windy discourse with a few final thoughts about the whole experience. Obviously it was a very imperfect instance of "community collaboration". As indicated, putting a group like this together requires an investment of effort and the patient outlook of a winemaker rather than a short-order cook. That disposition, alas, was out of sync with the perceived urgency driving the overall Northern Coastal Information and Research Program. NCIRP may have seemed slow off the marks to its funders and to passionate advocates of offshore development, but it was way too hurried for the judicious brewing of a strong and authentic community role.

The fact that the program ran low on funds was as debilitating to the closure of the process as undue haste was to its inception. In terms of actual influence over the "core four" studies done under NCIRP, the CGG had way less sway than they should have had. Looking back on the journey of the good ship NCIRP, we had very good guides; unfortunately, we raced out ahead before they had a truly valid chance to help us navigate! The technical studies ought to have been far more affected and determined by community-based appraisals of missing and essential knowledge – the things that the Basin's people really needed to know. This conclusion was largely verified by the enduring doubts and uncertainties expressed by the majority of presentations to the Priddle Panel in late 2004.

So, as I write, the future of offshore oil and gas remains a question mark – and so too must the prospects for the CGG reviving, growing and transforming itself into the potent, bias-balanced force it can be. If offshore development is further pursued, however, I fervently hope those who make the big decisions – and those who end up with the funds and the privilege and responsibility to do research in this incredible corner of the world – turn to the documented legacy and, also to the alumni of the Community Guidance Group for – well, yes, guidance, in every sense of that word.

# APPENDIX

## THE DRAFT COMMUNITY GUIDANCE GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE

*(circa December 2003)*

### **1. PURPOSE**

- To provide guidance, information and recommendations to the Northern Coastal Information and Research Program (NCIRP) regarding the design, conduct and review of research and related programming including dissemination of information and community engagement.

### **2. NATURE OF MEMBERSHIP**

- The group's membership will be drawn from communities within the Queen Charlotte Basin Study Area (see attached maps) and will reflect a balance among the diversity of geography, culture and ways of life within the region.
- Members will be asked to use their own experience, judgment, wisdom and familiarity with particular places and sectors of the region's society. They are not asked to formally represent nor report to any particular communities, organizations, groups or interests with whom they are affiliated. Accordingly, no community, organization, group or interest shall be seen to be represented or consulted by virtue of any member's appointment and participation.
- Participation by any member in this group is without prejudice to the existence or scope of any treaty, Aboriginal rights or title.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- To review and constructively critique the progress and activities undertaken within the Northern Coastal Information and Research Program.
- To participate in workshops and individual discussions aimed at improving the quality of work undertaken within NCIRP.
- To participate in the identification and formulation of new NCIRP projects.
- To review interim and draft final work products from NCIRP projects.
- To assist NCIRP researchers and staff in connecting with others from their community or region, or from particular sectors with which the member is familiar.
- To advise and assist in the dissemination of information about the work of NCIRP.

### **4. ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Members are accountable to each other for maintaining an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect.
- Any grievances should be addressed internally.
- Members are not to characterize the discussions of the group externally unless requested to do so by full group consensus.
- Notwithstanding clause 4.3, members are at liberty to speak out on issues related to oil and gas so long as they do not cite NCIRP interim draft products and ensure that their views are clearly identified as being their own and not necessarily UNBC's or the group's.

- Members are not accountable to nor should they represent the perspectives of any particular community, organization, group or interest.
- Members shall conduct themselves in a professional and dignified manner and relate to others with courtesy and respect.
- Members must promptly declare any potential conflict of interest, whether real or perceived.
- UNBC is accountable to the members individually and collectively to provide support they need to meet their responsibilities and to fully take account of and address advice and recommendations. For greater clarity this means inter alia that UNBC NCIRP staff will account for its decisions to the group, giving full explanations where significant differences exist between NCIRP decisions and group recommendations and advice.

### **PERIOD OF MEMBERSHIP**

- The members are appointed to March 31, 2004 and may, by mutual agreement, be extended.

### **MEETINGS**

- Number and Frequency: The Guidance Group will meet twice in person on or before March 31, 2004. These will be at a date, time and place mutually agreeable to the membership. Conference calls may also be arranged.

### **PROCEDURES AT MEETINGS**

- On the occasion of meetings of the full Guidance Group, a facilitator will be provided by UNBC. Rules will be informal. It is not intended that the group will make decisions nor need a consensus be reached on aspects of NCIRP although that may be useful, if possible. Any procedural matters (e.g. changes in agenda, meeting dates, etc.) will be decided upon by consensus decision-making procedures.

### **REIMBURSEMENT**

- Expenses: Members' expenses for attending meetings, in accordance with UNBC guidelines for eligible expenses and claim procedures, which will be provided to the members on appointment.

### **HONOURARIA**

- Members are eligible for honouraria at a rate of \$250 for services performed at the request of UNBC. If members intend to claim honouraria, they will be asked to enter into a simple contractual agreement with UNBC which will include a requirement of providing a log of time claimed for.