

Thursday, July 23, 2026

To:

- The Right Honourable Mark Carney (mark.carney@parl.gc.ca)
Prime Minister of Canada
- The Honourable Tim Hodgson (tim.hodgson@parl.gc.ca)
Minister of Energy and Natural Resources
- The Honourable Julie Dabrusin (julie.dabrusin@parl.gc.ca) **Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Nature**
- The Honourable Rebecca Alty (rebecca.alty@parl.gc.ca)
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations
- The Honourable David J. McGuinty (david.mcguinty@parl.gc.ca)
Minister of National Defence
- The Honourable Steven MacKinnon (Steven.MacKinnon@parl.gc.ca)
Minister of Transport
- The Honourable David Eby (premier@gov.bc.ca)
Premier of British Columbia

Re: Proposed Alberta West Coast Oil Pipeline Project

Dear Prime Minister, Ministers, and Premier Eby:

On behalf of BC Nature, I am writing regarding the proposed Alberta West Coast Oil Pipeline Project and its potential impacts on British Columbia's coastal ecosystems.

BC Nature is the provincial federation of more than 64 naturalist clubs representing over 7,000 members across British Columbia. For over 50 years, we have worked to conserve the province's biodiversity through science-based advocacy, education, citizen science, and support for the protection of important ecosystems and species at risk.

The proposed project raises significant concerns for one of Canada's most ecologically important coastal regions. While the pipeline and marine terminal would have localized impacts, the project's environmental footprint extends far beyond the terminal itself. The anticipated increase in crude oil tanker traffic through the Salish Sea has the potential to affect interconnected marine ecosystems extending from the Fraser River Estuary and Roberts Bank through Boundary Pass, Haro Strait, the Strait of Georgia and Juan de Fuca Strait.

These waters support internationally significant migratory bird populations, Pacific salmon, recovering humpback whale populations, Southern Resident Killer Whales, harbour porpoises, seals, sea lions, and numerous other marine species. Increased tanker traffic would add to existing pressures from underwater noise, vessel strikes, chronic marine pollution, and the risk of catastrophic oil spills, while further stressing ecosystems already experiencing the cumulative effects of industrial development and climate change.

BC Nature has consistently opposed further industrial development that threatens the ecological integrity of the Fraser River Estuary, Roberts Bank, and the broader Salish Sea. At the same time, we recognize that this proposal is proceeding through government review processes. As such, we believe it is essential that any decision be informed by the best available science and supported by the strongest possible environmental safeguards to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts on these globally significant ecosystems.

The ecological importance of the Salish Sea demands an ecosystem-based approach to decision-making. Assessments should not focus solely on the direct footprint of new infrastructure but should also consider the broader and long-term consequences of increased marine shipping on interconnected coastal ecosystems.

Accordingly, BC Nature recommends that the Government of Canada:

- Undertake a comprehensive cumulative effects assessment that considers the combined impacts of existing and proposed industrial developments and marine shipping throughout the Fraser River Estuary and the entire Salish Sea.
- Evaluate impacts using the best available science, including effects on marine mammals, Pacific salmon, migratory birds, Species at Risk, and the ecological processes that sustain them.
- Prioritize impact avoidance through project design and routing before relying on mitigation or habitat compensation.
- Require robust measures to reduce underwater noise, vessel strike risk, and operational pollution, including vessel speed management and other proven best practices where appropriate.
- Require comprehensive oil spill prevention, preparedness, and response measures that reflect the ecological sensitivity of the Salish Sea and recognize that prevention must remain the primary objective.
- Establish long-term, independent environmental monitoring before, during, and after construction and operation, with monitoring results made publicly available and adaptive management measures implemented where necessary.
- Ensure meaningful consultation and partnership with Indigenous Nations, recognizing Indigenous rights, knowledge systems, and stewardship responsibilities throughout the assessment and decision-making process.
- Apply the precautionary principle where there is scientific uncertainty regarding the potential for significant or irreversible environmental harm.

Enclosed is a backgrounder summarizing the proposed project, the ecological significance of the affected region, and BC Nature's principal environmental concerns. We hope this information will assist your review and support a comprehensive, science-based assessment of the project's potential environmental consequences.

Thank you for your consideration of our recommendations. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Harold Sellers".

Harold Sellers
President, BC Nature

Enclosure: *Backgrounder – Proposed Alberta West Coast Oil Pipeline Project*