



Environment  
Canada

Environnement  
Canada

## Working for the Environment in the Pacific and Yukon Region

[www.ec.gc.ca](http://www.ec.gc.ca)



### Our region

The species and habitats of British Columbia and Yukon are as varied as the region's geography. With thousands of kilometres of coastline, rugged mountains and breathtaking scenery, beauty and diversity abound. Many of the birds, mammals, reptiles, plants and marine species are uniquely adapted and are found nowhere else in Canada.

### Who we are

Whether it's patrolling the Pacific or Arctic coastlines, monitoring migratory bird sanctuaries, combating the illegal wildlife trade, inspecting industries or issuing weather warnings, our 570 employees in 26 locations across the region are hard at work year-round for British Columbia and Yukon residents.



### Our team

*"We provide British Columbia and Yukon residents with high-quality science, sound environmental predictions and action on key environmental issues. We are proud to work in an environmentally conscious region, with citizens who take environmental stewardship seriously."*

- Regional Director General,  
Pacific and Yukon Region

Canada

### What we do

Environment Canada employees in the Pacific and Yukon Region are responsible for the local enforcement of environmental and wildlife protection laws. This work includes preventing environmental damage through inspections and taking remedial actions such as prosecutions. We conduct inspections on imports and exports at port-of-entry, carry out investigations into unlawful activities, and conduct routine patrols and surveillance activities in protected areas and in migratory bird sanctuaries. We are also increasing our intelligence-gathering and enforcement activities to target poachers, smugglers and other criminals.

Environment Canada is using a new ecosystem approach to deliver its mandate in the region to protect areas under environmental stress. This approach was developed to identify key ecosystems, to ensure that decisions are made in an integrated way to achieve shared environmental objectives among partners and stakeholders.

Here are some examples of the approach:

- In the Okanagan-Similkameen ecosystem, we monitor water quality and quantity, work closely with the International Joint Commission and oversee the operation of transboundary Osoyoos Lake levels in this naturally arid region that is home to more than 50 federally listed species at risk.
- The Georgia Basin, which encompasses the land and water around Vancouver, faces threats to air quality, its marine and freshwater resources, its species and its natural habitats. Environment Canada delivers many scientific and monitoring activities under its national programs in response to these threats.
- Large ships within the North American Emission Control Area will be subject to environmental standards that will reduce emissions of nitrogen and sulphur oxide to benefit the ecosystem and human health. Enforcement within the North American Emission Control Area begins in August 2012.

- The Mountain Pine Beetle infestation has affected an area covering 130 000 square kilometres. In response to the infestation, our employees are conducting monitoring and research activities to help predict forest species that may be affected by this insect.

Located off the northern tip of Vancouver Island, the Scott Islands are at the heart of one of the most diverse marine ecosystems in Pacific Canada. The islands attract more than 2 million breeding seabirds and a variety of marine mammals and fish. That is why we are planning a new wildlife area for that region.

Environment Canada's Pacific and Yukon Region deals with region-wide and local water-related issues. For example, we are providing input into the extensive provincial consultations underway on the modernization of the British Columbia *Water Act*. We are also providing comments to the Yukon and British Columbia governments on the proposed wastewater systems effluent regulations under the *Fisheries Act* and the development of administrative agreements to implement new regulations.



The Meteorological Service of Canada provides water and weather data, weather warnings and forecasts to help ensure the safety and security of Canadians and their property. We maintain an observation network to monitor changes in the weather, climate, water and air quality, and to obtain the data required for weather and environmental prediction.

Environmental emergencies such as spills are always a threat to marine and other wildlife and public safety. Our emergency response staff and laboratory scientists and technicians participate in regular exercises and training sessions with provincial authorities and environmental organizations to ensure they are ready to handle a range of pollution threats and laboratory analysis. We also use our expertise to evaluate birds oiled at sea.

Through the federal environmental assessment process in British Columbia and the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* in Yukon, the

Department is actively engaged in the review of new proposed mining, infrastructure and energy projects throughout the region. We deal with ongoing concerns about the increase in crude-oil tanker traffic along the Pacific coast, and offshore oil and gas development in British Columbia and Yukon. We work to protect marine habitat in the face of recent increases in the number of requests for Disposal at Sea permits and carry out related enforcement activities.

Environment Canada and the Province of British Columbia have signed an agreement to cooperate on climate change. The province is a member of the Western Climate Initiative and plans to start a regional cap-and-trade system in 2012 with several provinces and U.S. states. In Yukon, a centre of research excellence will focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation. Environment Canada also actively supports green energy development in the region.

Our employees work with citizens and community leaders to develop programs to ensure a sustainable future. We work in partnership with the governments of British Columbia and Yukon, First Nations, municipal governments, and other organizations in the region. This has resulted in water quality monitoring in First Nations communities in Yukon and Alaska, the creation of an international board to protect the Porcupine Caribou, and initiatives on a number of other environmental issues, such as species at risk, wastewater management, air quality, climate change and environmental assessment.



### Did you know?

- ▶ British Columbia is Canada's most biologically diverse province. It has 76% of Canada's bird species, 70% of our freshwater fish species and 60% of our conifer species. Over 50 000 species and subspecies call the province home.
- ▶ British Columbia is home to 198 Aboriginal bands, 27 tribal councils, 7 distinct Aboriginal linguistic groups and 63% of reserves in Canada.
- ▶ The Yukon has 11 self-governing First Nations, more than anywhere else in Canada. This creates a unique governance structure in the territory where First Nations governments have certain powers over their lands. This influences Environment Canada's engagement with many First Nations governments in the territory on migratory bird and species-at-risk related issues, to name a few.

Cat. No.: En4-145/6-2011E-PDF  
ISBN: 978-1-100-18347-3

For information regarding reproduction rights, please contact Public Works and Government Services Canada at 613-996-6886 or at [droitdauteur.copyright@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca](mailto:droitdauteur.copyright@tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca)

Photos: © Environment Canada - 2011, Photos.com 2011, Bill Scott

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, represented by the Minister of the Environment, 2011