April 2018

Monitoring and enforcement of laws and policies in Canada: the bad, the ugly and how we can get to good

Christianne Wilhelmson

Georgia Strait Alliance, Canada, christianne@georgiastrait.org

Follow this and additional works at: https://cedar.wwu.edu/ssec

Part of the Fresh Water Studies Commons, Marine Biology Commons, Natural Resources and Conservation Commons, and the Terrestrial and Aquatic Ecology Commons

Wilhelmson, Christianne, "Monitoring and enforcement of laws and policies in Canada: the bad, the ugly and how we can get to good" (2018). Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference. 473.

https://cedar.wwu.edu/ssec/2018ssec/allsessions/473
Enforcement and monitoring in Canada: the bad, the ugly and getting to good

Christianne Wilhelmsen
Executive Director
As American as apple pie

As Canadian as possible, under the circumstances
• ....(one) systemic weakness afflicting Canadian environmental law and policy is a failure to effectively implement and enforce the law, dating back to the 19th century slaughter of the buffalo...

• If there is a chasm between environmental laws and their enforcement in the United States, then in Canada there is a Grand Canyon.”
What are we told stops effective enforcement and monitoring?

- budget cuts
- personnel constraints
- political interference
What REALLY stops it?

- Lack of political courage or will
Orcas – paper protection
Private Prosecutions
What REALLY stops it?

- Lack of political courage or will
- Lack of transparency/clarity of the law and policy
Salmon farms – who’s in charge?
What REALLY stops it?

- Lack of political courage or will
- Lack of transparency/clarity of the law and policy
- Industry and businesses often designed with pollution/damage to environment as part of the business model
  - Cost of doing business
  - Costs externalized

www.GeorgiaStrait.org
Abandoned vessels
What’s the solution?

- Stop tinkering
- Enforce laws on the books
- Work with industry to eventually remove assumptions that pollution/environmental harm is part of doing business
Christianne Wilhelmsen
Executive Director
www.GeorgiaStrait.org
@GeorgiaStraitBC on Twitter/Instagram
also on Facebook