

## Re: Protect Vargas Island Coastal Wolves to Safeguard Public and Wildlife

June 24, 2016

**Ms. Kathryn Ryan-Wilson**  
Clayoquot Area Supervisor  
BC Ministry of Environment  
BC Parks and Conservation Officer Services

**Mr. Steve Ackles**  
Conservation Officer, Port Alberni  
BC Ministry of Environment  
4885 Cherry Creek Rd.  
Port Alberni, BC, V9Y-8E9

Dear Ms. Ryan-Wilson and Mr. Ackles,

British Columbia's coastal wolves are special, living a unique existence, hunting and scavenging on the fringe between rainforest and ocean. Scientists believe that these small, sea-faring wolves may be a distinct subspecies to the rugged coastlines of the BC coast. As a keystone species, they are critical to maintaining the balance of coastal ecosystems, which are essential to our way of life as well as our local economy.

We come to you as representatives of the community, conservationists and business owners, to urge you to take strategic and thoughtful action to protect our one-of-a-kind coastal wolves.

BC's coastal wolves rely on access to beaches and the ocean for food. Wolves are highly intelligent social animals. Packs work just like close-knit human families do. At this time of year, with hungry pups in the den, wolf packs have more mouths to feed. With more than 80 percent of their food provided by the sea, they rely on what the tide brings in. At times, that food comes in with humans. With the summer tourists camping on Vargas beaches, these wolves have learned to dine on human food left behind or improperly secured by campers. We are all creatures of habit and wolves are no different. It is up to us, as humans, to adapt and to be responsible for our actions in wolf country.

Wolves have evolved to live on this coast for centuries. Especially in small packs like the Vargas Pack, survival of every member is critical. **The Vargas Island wolves were nearly killed off several years ago because of this same issue. Now, just when this population is starting to recover, we are at a crossroads. Let's not make the same mistake again.**

We agree that public and wildlife safety are paramount. We urge you to honour the Ahousaht First Nation's request for an immediate No Kill Policy for this Vargas wolf pack. Wolves are sacred to the Ahousaht Nation and we support and respect their position.

We respectfully ask for the following actions to move toward a solution that will keep the Vargas Island wolves wild and all human visitors safe:

1. Honour the Ahousaht Nation's request for a No Kill Policy for the Vargas Island wolf pack.
2. Adapt Vargas Island management plans to reflect the No Kill Policy put forward by the Ahousaht Nation.
3. Inform and enforce mandatory use of bear and wolf-proof food cache systems and zero tolerance for any improperly stored food (including food stored in kayaks).
4. Install bear and wolf-proof food caches at all camping areas.

Sincerely, the undersigned,

**Re: Protect Vargas Island Coastal Wolves to Safeguard Public and Wildlife**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dan Harrison', with a stylized, cursive script.

Dan Harrison  
Raincoast Education Society

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Nicklen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Paul Nicklen  
National Geographic Photographer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cristina Mittermeier', with a cursive, flowing script.

Cristina Mittermeier  
Sea Legacy Co-Founder

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ocean Simone', with a cursive script and a long horizontal flourish.

Ocean Simone  
Operations Manager, Ocean Outfitters