



## NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHES IN SUPPORT OF FIRST NATIONS BAN ON TROPHY HUNTING IN BC'S GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST

(VANCOUVER, BC, September 4 2013) - Coastal First Nations is proud to announce the launch of [www.BearsForever.ca](http://www.BearsForever.ca), a project of the Central Coast First Nations Bear Working Group. "This website gives all British Columbians the chance to meet some of our real coastal bears, and speak up on their behalf," said Heiltsuk Coastwatch Director William Housty. "My son is four and he loves bears. I hope when he has kids, they still have a chance to see these beautiful, intelligent animals out there in the wild."

"Bears are an essential part of our culture, and the coastal ecosystem," said Nuxalk biologist and elected councillor Megan Moody. "Here in the Great Bear Rainforest, the salmon they carry into the forests is responsible for up to 80% of the nutrients in our huge old-growth coastal trees. Whether we see it or not, all sorts of plants and animals rely on bears, including us as people."

"Right now, as young leaders, it's our job to rebuild local economies damaged by the collapse of fisheries and logging," said Kitsoo/Xai'xais councillor Douglas Neasloss. "We see ecotourism as a real opportunity. Wildlife viewing is a sustainable way to create local jobs, but not when trophy hunters are leaving bear carcasses in the same estuaries where we bring visitors."

"Bears are not trophies," said outgoing Wuikinuxv Fisheries Director Jennifer Walkus. "They're not a 'natural resource' to be shot and skinned and left to rot. They're our neighbours, and they deserve to stay a living, breathing part of the BC Coast, now and forever."

Members of the public are invited to voice their support for the Coastal First Nations ban on trophy hunting by signing the pledge at [www.BearsForever.ca](http://www.BearsForever.ca).

Coastal First Nations is an alliance of the Wuikinuxv Nation, Heiltsuk, Kitsoo/Xai'xais, Nuxalk, Gitga'at, Metlakatla, Old Massett, Skidegate, and Council of the Haida Nation, working together to create a sustainable economy on British Columbia's North and Central Coast and Haida Gwaii.

SOURCE: Coastal First Nations

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