Statement to the Joint Review Panel of the Northern Gateway Pipeline Project  
July 11, 2012

Good afternoon, and thank you for this opportunity. I am here with my young son Charlie and on behalf of my family and friends. I am also here as an Assistant Professor in Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Management at UNBC. Mostly, I am here because I care deeply about our planet, our place, and our future.

In Northern British Columbia communities, many guides, hunters, outfitters, forestry workers, tourism operators and their families depend directly on the health of our ecosystems and environment. All people and communities, large and small, in Northern BC (as elsewhere in Canada) ultimately depend on healthy fresh water, marine, air, and land resources along with the species these sustain. It is our collective responsibility to protect our resources. Here, we live in close proximity to our natural environment. We depend on it and identify with it.

Make no mistake, whether or not an oil spill happens, the money and relatively few jobs created by the Northern Gateway Pipeline in Northern BC will always depend on the exploitation of petroleum resources that contribute to global warming and destroy and poison ecosystems in Northern Alberta, BC, and the Territories. This is not development. I am not willing to support this shortsighted exploitation. The benefits will flow to Enbridge and distant jurisdictions, and the risk will pool across Northern BC. Our communities have most to lose, and least to gain from this project.

Those who oppose the pipeline are not “anti-development.” We simply recognize the reality that long-term social and economic well-being depend on developing environmentally sustainable industries using renewable resources. As such, the Northern Gateway Pipeline Project is wrong for BC, for Canada, for our families, and for our future. Thank you.

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