

News release

GREENPEACE

BREAKING: Sechelt Nation "kayaktivists" to protest Shell's Arctic oil spill vessel as it sails up the Inside Passage to Alaska

May 29 2015 (VANCOUVER) — Shell is at this moment sailing its oil spill containment vessel, the *Arctic Challenger*, through the Inside Passage on its way to Dutch Harbour where the company plans to begin drilling for oil as early as July 1st. Earlier this week, two Rising Tide activists chained themselves to this same vessel to delay it from leaving Seattle. ⁽¹⁾

According to the tracking site, marinetraffic.com, the *Arctic Challenger* is being tugged by the *Corbin Foss*, and will soon pass the Sechelt Nation. A spontaneous protest of "kayaktivists" is being organized by Candace Campo, cultural director of the Sechelt Nation, who just yesterday returned from a tour on board Greenpeace's ship *Esperanza* to raise awareness about Shell's Arctic plans and the threat of increased tanker traffic on the coast.

Chief Calvin Craigan of the Sechelt Nation, said:

"We support the efforts of Greenpeace — they are opposing what's going to happen in the Arctic. It's going to be done by Shell Oil, and they should be banned from that area — they should be ashamed of what they're trying to do. They're approaching a very sensitive area in the world. If they cause devastation there, it could be the end of the world as we know it." ⁽²⁾

This surprise move comes just as the Greenpeace ship *Esperanza* is sailing back from a tour with a delegation of Indigenous Peoples from six First Nations, who have been connecting coastal communities opposing tanker traffic with the seven-million-strong movement opposing Shell's arctic oil plans. ⁽³⁾

Candace Campo, cultural director of the Sechelt Nation, said:

"Our role is to support the communication and awareness of the impacts of oil. This includes ongoing climate change and the risk of increased tanker traffic that Shell's Arctic plans bring to the coast — which will result in a potential or even inevitable oil spill along our coastline, including the Salish Sea, the waters that as a shíshálh, Coast Salish person, I am born to protect."

A call-out on her Facebook page reads: "Say No To Shell! Arctic Oil Drilling! We are staging a protest, a kayaktivist, to say no to Shell at 9 pm tonight in Sechelt. Meet at the totem poles at the Sechelt community centre in front of the Church Talaysay Tours will donate the kayaks. We need banners, even made from Sheets that say No Shell! No to Arctic Oil; Yes to the Salish Sea! Bring your drums."

Shell's Arctic drilling plans have been the source of global controversy since they announced their intentions to drill in Alaska's icy waters more than three years ago. Since then, they have sunk more than \$6 billion USD into the project.

Earlier this month, hundreds of "kayaktivists" gathered in Seattle to protest Shell's Arctic drilling fleet. Days later, two people chained themselves to the anchor of the *Arctic Challenger*.

Jessica Wilson, head of Greenpeace Canada's Arctic campaign, said from onboard the *Esperanza*:

"People are protesting Shell's drilling fleet at every stage of its journey. From Seattle to BC to Alaska, these ships will continue to be met with fierce opposition. Shell might be the biggest oil company in

the world, but the movement to save the Arctic — merging now with the movement to defend the coast against extreme oil — is stronger.”

-30-

For more information:

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NOTES:

1. <http://www.thestranger.com/blogs/slog/2015/05/23/22269804/shellno-activists-have-been-attached-to-a-shell-arctic-vessels-anchor-chain-in-bellingham-since-last-night>
2. Chief Calvin Craigan's video: www.facebook.com/video.php?v=10153155471659961&pnref=story
3. <https://www.savethearctic.org/en-CA/the-people-vs-oil/map-blog/my-greenpeace-sea-journey-against-arctic-drilling/>