

## The Management of Natural Resources and the Environment in Canada: Historical and Transnational Perspectives



### Orcas, Pipelines, and the Politics of Science on the West Coast

#### Abstract

Today, there is no more evocative icon of the West Coast than the orca, and there is no more prominent product of Alberta than oil. Over the last decade, these two symbols and the values they represent have clashed in heated debates over Canadian energy and environmental policy. Ranging in Canadian and US waters, critically endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales are the most studied and most culturally influential population of cetaceans in human history, and they rely predominantly on declining numbers of Chinook salmon for food, particularly from the Fraser River. In 2013, their fate intersected with Canada's oil economy, when Houston-based Kinder Morgan proposed expanding its Trans Mountain pipeline, which transports oil from Alberta to the BC coast through the Fraser watershed.

In addition to raising questions of Indigenous sovereignty, the proposal posed new threats to orcas and the rest of the coastal ecosystem. In 2018, after years of public opposition and legal challenges, Kinder Morgan sold the pipeline to the Canadian government, which pushed forward with the project while promising to fund research on the threats facing the Southern Resident Killer Whales. Yet the federalization of the project raised new concerns about the politicization of science, as well as the fate of the Southern Residents. This talk will explore this history of changing values and clashing icons and ponder its implications for resource management and environmental protection on the West Coast.

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Credit: NOAA, a U.S. government agency

A killer whale chasing Chinook salmon

#### FRIDAYS @ 12PM - 13PM Ottawa

**27th May, 2022 @ 12:00 -13:00pm Ottawa**

Orcas, Pipelines, and the Politics of Science on the West Coast  
- Prof Jason Colby

**10th June, 2022 @ 12:00-13:00pm Ottawa**

Small-scale fisheries in Ghana: Historical and Transnational Perspectives  
- Professor Joseph Aggrey-Fynn

**24th June, 2022 @ 12:00-13:00pm Ottawa**

Grass in the cracks: Gender, social reproduction and climate justice in the Xolobeni struggle  
- Professors Shireen Hassim

**8th July, 2022 @ 12:00-13:00pm Ottawa**

What is Nature?: The Rise and Fall of Moncton's Petitcodiac Causeway  
- Professor Ronald Rudin

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