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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BC Nature to Challenge Cabinet Decision Approving Northern Gateway

June 17, 2014 (North Vancouver, BC) — The Federation of BC Naturalists (BC Nature) today announced it will file a lawsuit challenging the decision by the federal Cabinet to approve the Northern Gateway project.

The planned lawsuit will ask the Federal Court of Appeal to set aside this Cabinet decision on a variety of grounds. These include serious deficiencies and flaws in the December 19, 2013 Joint Review Panel report upon which the Cabinet decision is based. Legal counsel for BC Nature is the Environmental Law Centre (ELC) at the University of Victoria.

“Filing this lawsuit will ensure that the Federal Court of Appeal is able to hear and consider arguments relating to all of the various flaws and deficiencies associated with Northern Gateway approval process,” says Chris Tollefson, ELC Executive Director and BC Nature’s lawyer.

“BC Nature has been involved in the process from Day One,” says Kees Visser, President of BC Nature. “We cannot stand by and allow Cabinet to approve this ill-conceived project on the basis of a JRP report that is so flawed and incomplete.”

Today’s Cabinet decision accepts all of the JRP’s recommendations and findings and will allow the project to proceed subject to the Government of British Columbia granting the project the necessary provincial permits and other approvals. The reasons for the Cabinet decision did not address any of the deficiencies or flaws that BC Nature identified in its challenge to the JRP report filed in January 2014, which is currently pending before the Federal Court of Appeal.

A key argument in BC Nature’s new lawsuit will be that the JRP report was so lacking in detail and analysis that it deprived Cabinet of the factual and legal basis for making an informed decision on the project.

The lawsuit challenging Cabinet’s decision must be filed in the Federal Court of Appeal in the next fifteen days.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO ARRANGE INTERVIEWS, CONTACT:

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About BC Nature

BC Nature is a provincial charitable organization whose motto is to “know nature and keep it worth knowing”. It aims to provide over 5,000 naturalists and 53 clubs in BC with a unified voice on conservation and environmental issues; and to foster an awareness, appreciation and understanding of the natural environment so that it may be wisely used and maintained for future generations.

About the UVic Environmental Law Centre

The Environmental Law Centre is a non-profit society that, in partnership with the UVic Faculty of Law, established and operates Canada’s first public interest environmental law clinic program. Through this program, the ELC provides legal representation and assistance to conservation and community organizations, and First Nations throughout BC. It also advocates on a wide range of environmental law reform issues.