



Pan-Canada Perspectives/British Columbia

Summer, 2026

BC Is Burning!

More than 100 wildfires are raging across British Columbia, with roughly half classified as “out of control.” On August 8, Premier David Eby declared a province-wide State of Emergency. More than 21,000 people have already been forced from their homes under mandatory evacuation orders. Communities across the southern Interior are under threat, and the wildfire season is expected to continue well into the fall.

The final toll—lives lost, homes destroyed and communities devastated—has yet to be counted. But one message is already clear:

The climate emergency is no longer a distant threat. It is happening here. Now.

Wildfire seasons are becoming longer, hotter and more destructive—not only in BC, but across Canada and around the world. Decades of rising fossil-fuel emissions have continued to heat our atmosphere and destabilize our climate.

There is an uncomfortable irony: some of the communities hardest hit by these fires are among BC’s most conservative, where support for the fossil-fuel industry’s “**rip, strip and ship**” agenda has traditionally been strong.

How long can we continue supporting that agenda while watching homes, livelihoods and communities go up in flames?

SCAN! and other climate organizations have worked to break through the **Climate Silence**—the reluctance of politicians, media and the public to confront the climate emergency with the urgency it demands. But this summer, nature itself is breaking through that silence.

We no longer have to ask people to imagine what climate breakdown looks like. They can see it happening outside their doors.

This is a teachable moment.

Yes, we must show compassion, help those who have lost homes and livelihoods, and stand with communities facing evacuation and devastation.

But compassion does not require silence.

Precisely because people are experiencing the consequences of climate disruption, we must talk about how to prevent it from becoming worse. We should not exploit their suffering. **We should learn from it—and make sure our politicians do too.**

The question is no longer whether we can afford to transition away from fossil fuels. It is **how much more are we willing to risk by failing to do so?**

The solutions exist: dramatically improve energy efficiency, accelerate renewable energy, electrify transportation and buildings, and stop expanding our dependence on fossil fuels. Renewable technologies are already working, costs have fallen dramatically, and successful examples are multiplying.

What is holding us back is not technology. It is political will.

Let's use this summer's devastating fires to break through the Climate Silence. **Express empathy. Lend a helping hand. Stand with those who are suffering. But don't let this teachable moment pass.**

BC is burning. The warning could not be clearer. Now is the time to act!

*Jef Keighley
Co-Chair, Sunshine Coast Seniors
for Climate Action Now!*

Spring, 2026

BC's Conundrum

Here in British Columbia progressive voters are faced with a genuine conundrum.

Progressives have worked hard to secure and hold a continuous provincial NDP government since 2017. The current iteration, led by Premier David Eby, resulted in a minority government in October, 2024. Initially Eby secured a bare majority through an agreement with the two member Green Party, but that support was later withdrawn due to NDP's lack of action on environmental and climate related issues.

The BC Conservative Party, then led by John Rustad fell just short of a majority. Their fractious coalition has since shattered and Rustad was deposed. A three-member, ultra-right rump party, OneBC was formed.

The Conservatives are to elect a new leader on May 30th. All of the candidates have taken a hard line against any serious climate action. They are using repeal of the provincial legislation DRIPA - the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous People Act, unanimously enacted in 2019 - as a wedge issue. Their commitment to deregulate raw resource extraction and open saltwater access to oil and gas shipments from Alberta as a 'jobs strategy' is actively supported by corporate interests. Eby's public

support has tanked, which puts the Conservatives in striking distance of a majority should Eby's government fall.

Eby, in a bid to save his government, has jumped on board the Mark Carney 'Build Canada Bandwagon' which in Western Canada translates to rip, strip and ship our raw resources overseas to supposedly waiting customers, with the climate crisis be damned!

All of the above makes the work of our newly minted Sunshine Coast Seniors for Climate Action Now! all the more critical. We are committed to face these headwinds as well reach out to our fellow citizens to build greater public support for real action to address the climate crisis.

April, 2026

*Jef Keighley, Co-Chair, Sunshine Coast Seniors
for Climate Action Now!*