

For Immediate Release
July 4, 2016
Original Source Ecojustice

Ecojustice receives multi-year grant from Catherine Donnelly Foundation

TORONTO — The Catherine Donnelly Foundation (CDF) has awarded Ecojustice a five-year, \$750,000 grant to fund efforts to advance the legal recognition of every Canadian's right to a healthy environment.

“Charter recognition of our basic human right to a healthy environment will be life-changing for Canadians from coast-to-coast-to-coast,” said Devon Page, Ecojustice executive director. “The Catherine Donnelly Foundation’s generous support will help Ecojustice, its partners, and thousands of Canadians shift the conversation around environmental rights in Canada from a question of ‘if’ to ‘when’.”

Notably, the Foundation’s support enabled Ecojustice’s strategic partnership with the David Suzuki Foundation, which led to the Blue Dot Blue Dot movement, a national campaign that has mobilized thousands of Canadians to urge their governments to take action in support of environmental rights.

To date, more than 130 municipalities, representing a third of Canada’s population, have passed declarations in support of the right to a healthy environment. Within the last nine months, environmental rights legislation has been introduced in three provincial legislatures and the House of Commons, further reinforcing the case for Charter recognition of the right to a healthy environment and a signaling the movement’s growing strength.

“Realizing a vision of a supreme law that reflects our values, compels action on environmental protection and secures our natural heritage for future generations is why the Catherine Donnelly Foundation is proud to continue supporting Ecojustice’s vital work – Recognizing our Right to a Healthy Environment”, said Valerie Lemieux, Catherine Donnelly Foundation general director.

According to national polling conducted by the David Suzuki Foundation, 85 per cent of Canadians agree that people should have the right to a healthy environment — clean air, safe water, healthy ecosystems, and a stable climate.

From Portugal in 1976 to Grenada in 2015, the right to a healthy environment has gained recognition faster than any other human right during the last 50 years. Evidence from these countries demonstrates that recognizing the right to a healthy environment can lead to stronger laws, healthier communities, healthier ecosystems and innovative, resilient economies.

“Charter recognition of the right to a healthy environment is the natural next step in the progression of human rights law in Canada,” Page said. “Thanks to the support of the Catherine Donnelly Foundation, we are confident that this reality is within our reach.”

About:

Ecojustice is a Canadian charity that goes to court to enforce and strengthen Canada’s environmental laws on behalf of people and the planet.

Established in 2003, the Catherine Donnelly Foundation is a private charitable foundation based in Toronto that provides grants to charities addressing issues related to Adult Education, Transitional Housing, and Environmental Sustainability.

For media inquiries:

Devon Page, executive director | Ecojustice
605 685 5618 x 233 (o) | 778 828 5512 (c)

Valerie Lemieux, general director | Catherine Donnelly Foundation
416 461 2996