



Press Release

The Big Wild wilderness protection movement launches ***Social networking site created to enlist and mobilize support***

Date May 5, 2008

Location Vancouver

The Big Wild, a new social movement to advance large-scale wilderness protection in Canada, is “Goin’ Wild on the Streets,” launching itself with a series of high-profile guerrilla marketing stunts in 11 cities across the country. The coordinated launch activities and promotions will introduce Canadians to www.thebigwild.org, a new social networking site designed to mobilize support and protect Canada’s public wilderness areas.

The Big Wild is founded by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS), Canada’s only non-government organization devoted solely to large-landscape wilderness protection, and Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC), Canada’s largest retail cooperative for self-propelled recreation equipment.

“The Big Wild is a new way for everyone who cares about our country’s wilderness to voice their support for protecting it,” says Anne Levesque, National Executive Director, CPAWS. “The goal of The Big Wild is to establish an influential Canadian-wide movement to protect at least half of Canada’s public land and water in a permanently wild state. We invite every individual and group that shares our vision to add their voice on www.thebigwild.org. Together our small voices can create big change.”

Created by Tribal DDB, the online division of DDB Canada, the new social networking site allows Canadians to share stories and media about wilderness experiences and learn more about the country’s wild spaces in need of protection. Most importantly, it will also act as a catalyst to raise awareness and mobilize support for conservation campaigns. The evolving site will continue to have features added throughout this year and next.

“More than a static site, www.thebigwild.org is where Canada’s wilderness protection movement comes to life for supporters,” says Cosmo Campbell, creative director, Tribal



DDB, Vancouver. “With all communications ultimately directing audiences to this hub, the social networking site plays a crucial role bringing the brand to life.”

To support www.thebigwild.org and launch The Big Wild movement, DDB Canada’s Vancouver office and ZIP DDB in Montreal established a robust, integrated marketing program, which was first revealed to MEC members in March through a print campaign in the retailer’s Spring catalogue. The program includes branding and design by Karacters Design Group, CSR strategies developed by DDB Echology, and guerilla marketing and media relations by DDB Public Relations.

The Big Wild kicks off with its “Goin’ Wild on the Streets” guerilla marketing campaign today in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec City, Halifax and St. John’s. MEC and CPAWS volunteers dressed in backcountry gear are conducting street-theatre events in high-traffic areas over the next two weeks to raise awareness about The Big Wild and get Canadians to add their voice to www.thebigwild.org and join the growing list of supporters.

The activities include parades featuring banners and casts of muddy mountain bikers, skiers in touring modes, portaging canoeists and kayakers, mountaineers, backpackers with trekking poles, and climbers. Urban campsites or “engagement stations” will also be set up at key locations, such as Queen’s Park in Toronto, Ottawa City Hall, Princess Island Park in Calgary, and Mount-Royal metro station in Montreal. Additionally, in Vancouver rappellers will be descending the walls of the MEC store to generate excitement and promote The Big Wild.

DDB also developed an ongoing in-store green lace program for MEC stores across Canada to help promote The Big Wild. For a small donation to The Big Wild fund, customers at MEC can purchase green Big Wild shoelaces. The program encourages customers to wear one lace and spread the word by passing the other lace to a friend. This initiative is a physical demonstration of how Canadians can support protecting at least half of Canada’s wilderness.

Well-known Canadians including Sam Roberts (Musician), K-OS (Musician), Bruce Kirkby (Author & Adventurer), Sara Potvin-Bernal (Team Canada Whitewater Slalom Kayaker), Becky Mason (Artist and Canoeist), Margie Gillis (Solo Dance Artist), Wade Davis (Author & Writer) and Luc Picard (Actor) are already supporting the initiative by either wearing a green lace or adding their voice online at www.thebigwild.org.

While CPAWS and MEC are the founding members of The Big Wild, it is hoped other groups will eventually join through sponsorship, education and conservation work.



About The Big Wild™

The Big Wild™ is an initiative launched by the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) and Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC) to mobilize Canadians to demonstrate support for the protection of Canada's publicly-owned wilderness. The vision of the movement is that Canada will protect at least half of our wilderness from industrial development. Donations to The Big Wild are deposited into a charitable fund established to support wilderness conservation campaigns. For more information please visit www.thebigwild.org.

About The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) is Canada's only non-government organization devoted solely to large-landscape wilderness protection. Established in 1963, CPAWS has been instrumental in protecting over 400,000 km² of Canada's most treasured wild places, including Pacific Rim, Killarney, Nahanni, Kluane, Pukaskwa and Gwaii Haanas. Today CPAWS has 13 chapters covering nearly every province and territory and is in regular contact with 40,000 supporters across Canada. For more information, please visit: www.cpaws.org.

About Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC)

Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC), Canada's largest retail cooperative for self-propelled outdoor recreational clothing and equipment. MEC provides quality products and services for activities such as hiking, climbing, and skiing. Established in 1971, MEC has more than 2.7 million members throughout Canada and the world. For more information, please visit: www.mec.ca.

About DDB Canada

DDB Canada (www.ddbcanada.com) is the most creatively acclaimed, internationally recognized marketing communications agency in Canada. Known for advertising that generates significant results for clients, DDB Canada is *Strategy* magazine's 2007 Agency of the Year, and was named one of the "Best Small and Medium Employers in Canada" in 2007 by the Queen's University School of Business. A "total communications company," DDB believes creativity is the strongest business tool. DDB Canada has offices in Victoria, Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto and Montreal. The agency's integrated divisions include: DDB Kid Think (youth marketing), DDB Public Relations, Tribal DDB (online and interactive), Karacters Design Group, Rapp Collins (direct), Radar DDB (social media marketing) and DDB Echology (corporate social responsibility).

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