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INTERVENOR

*Dedicated to environmental equity, justice,
health for over 50 years*

Summer Student Profiles

CELA has been working to advance environmental justice for over fifty-years.

To build on this history, CELA also works to mentor and support the next generational of environmental lawyers.

This summer, CELA welcomed six dedicated and enthusiastic law and paralegal students to our team.

In supporting our work on public education and law reform, they learned about environmental justice issues and brought also new and valuable perspectives to CELA's work.

Here's a quick summary of who they are and their contributions this summer. We wish them the best of luck as they continue on their professional journeys!

Rhea Badhwar is entering her third year of law school at the Lincoln Alexander School of Law, where she is completing coursework in environmental law and working on a directed study titled The Legal Exclusion of Animal Agriculture from Canada's Climate Framework.

This summer, Rhea researched issues related to extreme heat exposure, drafted several public submissions to the City of Toronto and provincial ministries, and conducted in-depth research on public participation and funding in environmental decision-making before the Ontario Land Tribunal. She also assisted with CELA's joint submission with Ecojustice regarding the Ontario Civil Rules Review and the potential impacts of the proposed changes on public interest environmental litigation.

Luke Eisen is entering his third year at the Bora Laskin Faculty of Law at Lakehead University.

This summer at CELA, he co-led research on an Application for Review pursuant to the *Environmental Bill of Rights*. He also drafted several legal memoranda and participated in a PFAS/CEPA policy project. In addition to his research work, Luke supported several summary advice files which has included direct communication with clients. Outside of the office, Luke presented on environmental law topics at the Oakville Rotary Club and the University of Toronto's Law Youth Summer Program for high school students. Following his summer employment, Luke is excited to be returning to CELA as Law Practice Placement Student from September to December.

Adam Green is entering his second year of law school at Western University.

Adam worked primarily on water-related projects during his time at CELA. He began by conducting comparative legal research on municipal approaches to lead service line (LSL) replacement across Canada. This involved analyzing demographic data, reviewing municipal by-laws, and drafting a memo comparing enabling legislation across provinces. He then prepared a memorandum on municipal bonusing, examining whether statutory limits on grants or loans to businesses could constrain programs encouraging private-side LSL replacement. Afterward, he drafted a memo on retrofits, exploring whether municipalities can mandate stricter plumbing retrofits than those required provincially. His summer experience at CELA was incredibly rewarding, it has deepened his understanding of Ontario's water legislation and administrative law provided him with valuable insights and memories.

Madison Harrison is finishing her requirements for the Paralegal Program at Fanshawe College.

During her time with CELA, she advanced community right to know using air pollution-income mapping and reviewed regulations applying to toxic substances. Her work included creating an infographic illustrating the impacts of air pollutants on disadvantaged communities and air quality regulations. She also reviewed Canadian and U.S. government regulations on PFAS, and drafted a request for pollution data disclosure and a submission in response to a federal government proposed project to clean up contaminated sites. Madison also completed research memos on the oil sands sector and their reporting under the National Pollutants Release Inventory to support advocacy efforts for improved environmental reporting and pollution disclosure.

Michelle Lin is entering her second year at the Peter A. Allard School of Law at the University of British Columbia and joined CELA through the Ministry of Attorney General's Debwewin program.

Over the summer, Michelle dedicated her time to legal research focused on the intersection between Indigenous communities and environmental law, including writing a case comment, legal research on issues relating to costs in court proceedings and air pollution in First Nations communities, and litigation support for an ongoing CELA case. Michelle also presented on environmental law topics at the Oakville Rotary Club. Lastly, she also supported CELA in writing Access to Information and Privacy requests to the Federal Government.

Olivia Parker is entering her second year at the University of Toronto Faculty of Law.

Olivia spent her summer finalizing an Environmental Legal Action guide in partnership with the David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights. Additionally, she wrote a soon-to-be-released report for our campaign on the inequitable impacts of climate change. Olivia wrote blog posts on a model [Oregon statute](#) for migrant worker protection and [air conditioning access](#) across Canada, and memos on environmental justice and migrant worker protection in the United States and Europe. Olivia also conducted research into the availability of funding for air conditioners for Ontario residents receiving ODSP and Ontario Works benefits.



Image of articling student Zoé St Pierre courtesy of CELA photo collection.

Welcoming a New Articling Student

We are pleased to welcome [Thomas Perry](#) as the CELA articling student for 2025/2026.

Thomas is from Toronto, and recently completed his law degree at Queen's University. Prior to entering law school, Tom completed a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science at Queen's. During law school, he worked with the Queen's Legal Aid Clinic and was a member of the varsity Triathlon team. In his free time Tom enjoys working out, playing sports, walking/hiking and visiting with friends or family.

Thomas takes the reigns from Julie Lopez, who served as CELA's articling student for 2024/2025. Julie was a valuable addition to CELA's team and we're grateful for her dedication and passion for environmental justice. We wish her the best of luck as she returns to Ottawa to work with the Association of Justice Counsel.

Support Future Leaders

The students and articling students you met in this newsletter remind us that mentoring the next generation is at the heart of CELA's mission. That's where you can help.

The Canadian Environmental Law Foundation raises money every year to support CELA's articling student program.

By making a [one-time gift or becoming a monthly donor](#), you can support the environmental lawyers of tomorrow, ensuring justice continues to be defended for decades to come.

Your gift also safeguards the past. The Foundation's Canadian Environmental Law Collections preserve the hard-won history of environmental law and policy in Canada.

Case Updates

Case Update - Proposed Brownfield Development in Kingston

After conducting a multi-week public hearing in 2024, the Ontario Land Tribunal recently released its decision on land use planning appeals involving the proposed re-development of highly contaminated shoreline property in Kingston's inner harbour.

The decision conditionally approves a scaled-down version of the residential/commercial development, but the Tribunal agreed with the City and CELA's client No Clearcuts Kingston (NCK) that an on-site portion of a Provincially Significant Wetland must not be developed.

Additional plans, documents, studies, and approvals are required before the development can be constructed, and NCK will continue to closely monitor this situation. More information on this case can be [found on our website](#).



Image of Pickering Nuclear Generating Station courtesy of CELA photo collection.

Neighbours of a Nuclear Plant - Proposal to Extend the Life of Pickering B Nuclear Generating Station

Ontario Power Generation (OPG) has applied to the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) to rebuild and extend the operational lives of the four reactors at the Pickering B nuclear generating station. The CNSC will hold a 2-part public hearing beginning on April 2, 2026, and continued the week of June 22, 2026 to consider the application.

Members of the public can apply for [participant funding](#), with applications due by September 15th. Even without funding, you can still provide comments; deadlines for these will be announced later.

CELA is highly concerned by the proposal to extend the operation of the Pickering B reactors for an additional 30-plus years, especially given its proximity to millions of people within the Greater Toronto Area. As well, the province's directed population growth around the Pickering nuclear station compromises effective emergency preparedness, and increases risk to the community.

Law Reform Updates

Building Canada Act Undermines Indigenous and Environmental Justice

CELA recently sent a [letter](#) to Prime Minister Carney and Minister LeBlanc, stating our concerns regarding the *Building Canada Act* (BCA). In a [new blog post](#), CELA Counsel Jacqueline Wilson expresses serious concern about the

BCA and its proposed use to fast-track mega projects that may be environmentally risky and harmful to health and safety. More information on the impacts of the legislation and why it matters can be found on CELA's [Action Alert](#) page.



Heat Collaborative members, from left to right: Dr. Donald Cole, Marcia Stone, Farheen Mahmood, Jacqueline Wilson.

Heat Collaborative Calls for Action

In the wake of dangerous heat waves in Ontario this summer, and with worsening extreme heat driven by climate change, CELA joined the Heat Collaborative in hosting a press conference and calling on the provincial government to take action.

The Heat Collaborative is a network of organizations active in Ontario on the growing problem of extreme heat and its impacts on vulnerable communities and individuals. Ontario has had an unprecedented six multi-day heat warnings this summer, along with high humidity and wildfire smoke. Many seniors, children, tenants, workers and people with chronic illnesses are suffering.

Extreme heat is not going away. With climate change continuing to ramp up, this may well be the coldest summer for the rest of our lives. Read the full call for action on [our website](#).

Ontario Weakens Oversight of Stormwater Management, Waste Management and Water-Taking

The Ontario government recently approved regulatory changes that significantly reduce oversight of certain waste management systems, storm water management, and water-taking activities.

While the government frames these changes as efficiency measures, they weaken safeguards designed to protect Ontario's drinking water sources and watershed health. By replacing environmental approvals with self-registration and expanding exemptions, the province is reducing public oversight and accountability.

CELA expressed significant concerns over these changes when they were proposed back in 2023. More information, including the impacts of the decisions, can be found on [our website](#).

Ontario Assumes Responsibility for School Boards with Lead in Drinking Water

The Ontario Ministry of Education recently appointed supervisors to five school boards, including four that rank among the worst in the province for lead in drinking water. This decision raises questions about whether the province will finally address lead exposure in schools, a long-standing issue highlighted by CELA's March 2025 [report](#). CELA [urges](#) Minister Paul Calandra to ensure the new supervisors prioritize protecting children from the harmful effects of lead. Read more in [this blog post](#).

Protecting Ontario's Water: CELA Challenges Proposed Regulatory Changes

CELA recently [submitted comments](#) urging the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks to reconsider its proposed amendments to Ontario's water management framework, as these changes risk undermining essential environmental safeguards.

We recommend withdrawing or revising the amendments to ensure full environmental review, public participation, and consideration of a proponent's qualifications remain mandatory for permits. Additionally, CELA advocates for maintaining full public notice and comment rights for all water-taking permit decisions and requiring a comprehensive regulatory review, including an environmental reassessment and evaluation of the new operator's

qualifications, whenever ownership or operational control changes. These measures are crucial to protect Ontario's water resources.

Legal Right to a Healthy Environment in Canada

Canadians now have a legal right to a healthy environment under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act* (CEPA). CELA, alongside a number of environmental organizations, recently [sent a letter](#) to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change in support of the right to a healthy environment and the actions necessary to protect those rights.

Webinars and Resources

Presentation: Nominating Radionuclides as a Candidate Chemical of Mutual Concern

CELA presented at a binational meeting of NGOs with the Canada Water Agency, Environment and Climate Change Canada, and the US Environmental Protection Agency. The meeting was in response to the US and Canadian governments proposal not to designate radionuclides as a candidate chemical of mutual concern under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

The presentations from the meeting are [available on our website](#).

Environmental Legal Action: A Guidebook to Protecting Environmental Rights in Ontario

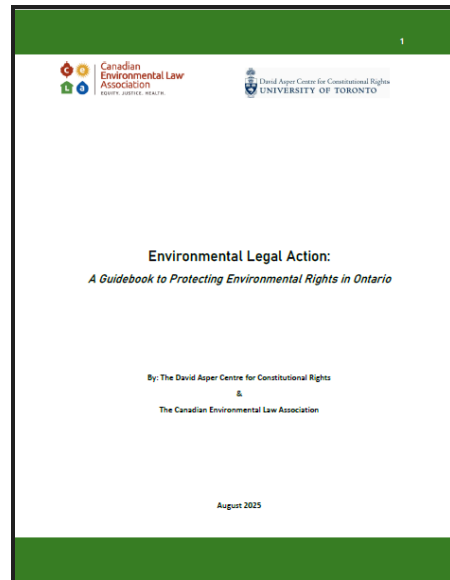
CELA is pleased to have partnered with the David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights to develop a new resource, titled [Environmental Legal Action: A Guidebook to Protecting Environmental Rights in Ontario](#).

Originally created as an Asper Centre student working group project, this Guidebook is designed to equip community organizations and activists with practical starting points for advocating for environmental justice in Ontario.

The Guidebook covers key tools and avenues for action, including:

- Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights
- Nuisance law
- Charter rights
- Indigenous rights and governance

It also outlines proposed reforms to strengthen environmental protection at both the provincial and federal levels.



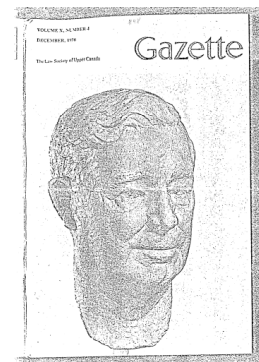
25 Years of Source Water Protection in Ontario

Conservation Ontario recently released an [informative video](#) (which includes CELA lawyer Rick Lindgren) on the importance of protecting drinking water sources, and it outlines the progress that has been made in the province under the *Clean Water Act* since the Walkerton drinking water tragedy in 2000.

From the Foundation

August Feature

This month's feature from the Canadian Environmental Law Archive is an article titled "[Standing for Citizens: An Idea Whose Time Has Come](#)". Originally published in a 1976 issue of the Law Society of Upper Canada's *Gazette*, the article written by John Swaigen and Elizabeth Block argued to abolish the "standing barrier" that prevented members of the public from going to court to protect the environment and other public rights.



Support Our Work

Are you interested in supporting CELA's work?

The Canadian Environmental Law Foundation supports CELA's work on environmental law and justice issues.

A tax-creditable donation to the Foundation ensures that CELA can continue to provide research and educational support for environmental law reform, and legal assistance to low-income communities who are adversely – and disproportionately – affected by environmental issues.

By making a [one-time gift or becoming a monthly donor](#), you can help ensure access to environmental justice in Ontario.

In addition to supporting CELA, one of the driving forces behind the creation of the Foundation was a desire to protect and document the history of environmental law and environmental decision-making.

A key initiative of the Foundation is the Canadian Environmental Law Collections, an extensive library of online and printed resources that document Canada's environmental law and policy history.

As we have seen in recent months south of the border, valuable information on pollution and environmental law can be destroyed or withheld from the public by unsympathetic governments.

Your [support helps ensure](#) we can all have access to the history of environmental law for generations to come.

Support Our Work



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