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Media Release

Canada's Energy Union wants to keep moratorium on offshore oil and gas

CEP joins the Oil Free Coast Alliance

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Vancouver – A decision to join the Oil Free Coast Alliance was announced by Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union Vice President, Dave Coles today.

“Our members were very clear on three points,” stated Dave Coles, CEP Vice President. “There will be very few long term jobs created from this potential industry, most of those jobs will go to people from outside British Columbia and finally, and most importantly, the risk to the environment is simply not worth it.”

“On behalf of the Oil Free Coast Alliance I want to express our delight in welcoming the CEP to the coalition,” states Oonagh O’Connor Offshore, Oil and Gas Campaign Coordinator with the Living Oceans Society. “Having the union that represents the vast majority of Canada’s energy workers deciding to work with us on this issue will significantly strengthen the voice of the Alliance to help us send a stronger message to the federal and provincial governments.

"Existing jobs in coastal communities, such as fisheries and tourism, are far more valuable than a handful of potential jobs in a high-stakes industry," says Bill Wareham, acting director of marine conservation with the David Suzuki Foundation. "Energy conservation technologies and renewable energy will offer far more long-term jobs to British Columbians than offshore oil drilling."

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The Oil Free Coast Alliance recognizes that an offshore oil and gas industry would threaten more jobs than it would create for coastal communities. Since its formation in 1999, the Alliance has grown to 105 member groups including the UFAWU, Living Oceans Society, David Suzuki Foundation, Sierra Club, Greenpeace, Musgamagw Tsawataineuk Tribal Council and the TBuck Suzuki Foundation.

Last November CEP delegates from BC gathered in Vancouver to review current information regarding offshore oil and gas exploration off the coast of British Columbia. The delegates recommended to the National Union that CEP go on record as opposing the lifting of the moratorium and supports the prevention of seismic testing.

“Our members here in British Columbia have told us loud and clear that they are opposed to lifting the moratorium and that is why today we are announcing our participation in the Oil Free Coast Alliance,” continues Coles. “The Alliance provides the vehicle for our members to send a strong message to all levels of government that energy workers in this province do not support putting our environment at risk.”

The Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union represents 162,000 working from coast to coast, including 12,000 members in British Columbia.

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