



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 1, 2026

Canada's First Wetsuit Disposal Ban Lands on the West Coast

ALBERNI-CLAYOQUOT REGIONAL DISTRICT – The Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (ACRD) has teamed up with Surfrider Foundation Canada (SFC) to keep neoprene wetsuits out of the landfill and in the lineup.

Retired wetsuits on the West Coast now have a better fate than the landfill. This year, Surfrider requested that the ACRD implement a ban on the disposal of wetsuits as waste at the West Coast Landfill (WC Landfill). On September 23, 2026, the ACRD Board of Directors adopted an amendment to *Bylaw R1033, West Coast Landfill Tipping Fee and Regulation* to add wetsuits under Schedule C "Prohibited Waste". This change makes the WC Landfill the first in Canada to ban wetsuit disposal.

"We're thrilled to achieve the first disposal ban on wetsuits at the West Coast Landfill," says Lilly Woodbury, Campaigns and Storytelling Director of SFC. "Through this victory, we'll be able to process more wetsuits at the ReSurf facility in Ucluelet and influence more landfills to also adopt disposal bans on wetsuits. This move is part of a greater shift towards a circular economy, where materials are kept in use, which saves water, lowers greenhouse gas emissions, supports local jobs, reduces waste and eliminates pollution."

Wetsuits are made from neoprene, a synthetic rubber that doesn't break down in the landfill. That's where the ReSurf Program comes in. Operated by SFC in Ucluelet, ReSurf keeps wetsuits out of the landfill through repair, recycling, and upcycling processes. SFC has partnered with the ACRD to make it easy to do the right thing: wetsuits are accepted free of charge at the Ocean Plastic Depot located within the WC Landfill.

"This is a great example of what can be achieved when local governments and community organizations work together" says ACRD Board Chair John Jack. "By creating a dedicated recycling pathway for neoprene, we're reducing waste, supporting local innovation, and helping residents make more sustainable choices while turning waste into a resource."

In the last year, ReSurf has diverted an estimated 10,000 lbs of wetsuits across British Columbia. People can also drop off their wetsuits for recycling at 20+ participating surf shops across coastal BC, as well as mail in their wetsuits to ReSurf directly, to learn more, visit surfrider.ca/resurf.

Daniel Raab, the ReSurf Program Manager, shares his enthusiasm on the victory, "We are excited to be working alongside the ACRD to expand ReSurf's impact across the region. Our partnership will continue to increase the awareness of ReSurf's services while building meaningful momentum towards diverting end-of-life wetsuits from the landfill and into more sustainable and circular pathways."



The ban is a small change on paper with a significant ripple effect. More wetsuits reaching ReSurf means more gear repaired, reused, and reimagined, with the broader goal of shifting the entire surf gear industry towards greater sustainability and circularity.

- 30 -

About Surfrider Foundation Canada

Surfrider Foundation Canada is dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's oceans, waves, and beaches, for all people, through a powerful activist network. Through volunteer-led chapters and clubs, Surfrider leads programs and campaigns focused on clean water, plastic reduction, coasts and climate, ocean protection, and beach access.

Media Contact:

Daniel Raab, ReSurf Program Manager
draab@surfrider.ca, 647 981 1980

About the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District

Established in 1966, the Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District is in the heart of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. It encompasses more than 6,500 square kilometres, with a population of approximately 31,000. The ACRD consists of member municipalities Port Alberni, Tofino, Ucluelet, as well as Bamfield, Beaufort, Long Beach, Sproat Lake, Beaver Creek and Cherry Creek. It was also the first regional district to welcome full participation on the board from the Treaty First Nations of Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Yuułuʔiłʔatḥ Government, Uchucklesaht Tribe Government and Toquaht Nation. The ACRD is within the territory of the Nuu-chah-nulth Nations. The ACRD is governed by a fourteen-member Board of Directors that represent the member jurisdictions. The regional district offices are in Port Alberni.

Media Contact:

Heather Thomson, Communications Coordinator
hthomson@acrd.bc.ca , 250-206-5162