

Forest Views

a newsletter for customers and investors of Canadian logging companies

FALL 2004

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Photo: Ron Hewson

"If one cares about endangered and threatened species, or preserving the worlds' last remaining ancient forests, then action and innovation are clearly required in British Columbia and elsewhere to address these pressing and persistent problems", Dr. Cashore, co-author of *Global Environmental Forest Policies: Canada as a Constant Case Comparison of Select Forest Practice Regulations*.

Cause for Concern

Uncertainty mounts in Great Bear Rainforest

The Provincial government celebrated "Parks Day" in British Columbia this year by announcing an agreement on a potential "Spirit Bear Conservancy" as the outcome of the land use planning processes in the Great Bear Rainforest. The Province cited Greenpeace and other environmental groups as

supporting the package.

Unfortunately, that's not quite accurate. Greenpeace is party to the consensus recommendations of the Central Coast planning process. Those we support. The North Coast process is still incomplete, and although there is a preliminary set of recommendations

there are also significant outstanding issues. The Liberal Government's spin-doctors, however, produced a press release that reduced land use planning for the entirety of the Great Bear Rainforest to a focus on one white bear in one region.

Meanwhile, other recommendations from the planning process that are absolutely key to maintaining the consensus were significantly altered by the Government's interpretation.

The morning of the announcement, when Greenpeace finally pried loose copies of the Government's statement on "our" stakeholder process outcomes, we discovered the reason for their secrecy. The Liberal Government press release had reduced the entire central and north coast land-planning outcomes and drafts to a focus on some of the Spirit Bear's territory. Not that the Spirit Bear shouldn't be protected – its protection is vitally important. But the coastal land use recommendations we have worked so hard to achieve cover a

much greater area and include significant management recommendations.

The supporting documents did touch on some of the other key recommendations of the planning processes. But in doing so, they served to highlight further issues of concern.

Although the press materials include a reference to Ecosystem-based Management – a cornerstone of the consensus – the Government now admits they are still studying EBM, its' costs and impacts and have yet to determine whether they will ultimately accept, support and facilitate its implementation in the Great Bear region.

Another major issue is the characterization of the "Biodiversity Areas" agreed to in the recommendations. The Liberal Government's spin on this was alarming.

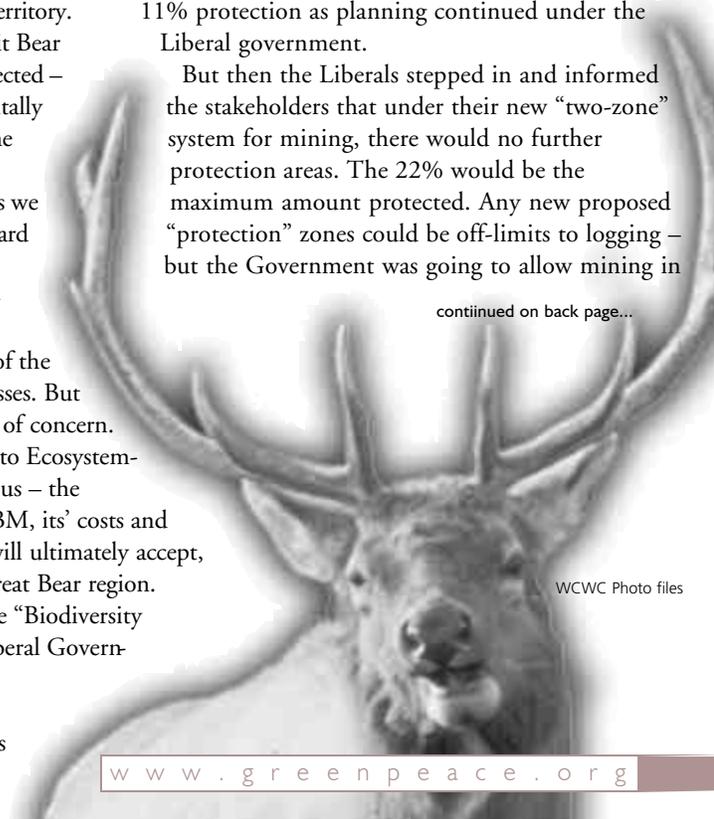
The multi-million dollar independent science team established to advise the planning processes recommended a minimum of 44-60% pro-

tection if the Great Bear ecosystem is to remain healthy and fully functioning. But the central coast stakeholders couldn't agree to go that far.

The major logging corporations, the forestry union and logging town mayors disagreed with environmental groups, tourism operators and the scientists and refused to recommend such high levels of protection. We ended up with a recommendation for 33% protection – 22% in the first round of planning under the previous NDP government, followed by another 11% protection as planning continued under the Liberal government.

But then the Liberals stepped in and informed the stakeholders that under their new "two-zone" system for mining, there would no further protection areas. The 22% would be the maximum amount protected. Any new proposed "protection" zones could be off-limits to logging – but the Government was going to allow mining in

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WCWC Photo files



photo: Wilderness Committee files

With autumn comes the long anticipated return of salmon to the rivers of the Great Bear Rainforest. It is also a mid-year milestone for the transition phase towards a new type of forestry in the region – Ecosystem-based Management. In 2001, when the first commitment to Ecosystem-based Management was made in the Great Bear Rainforest, the adult coho salmon that are returning to spawn this year were just beginning life as they hatched in the rainforest streams. Now, three years later, these same coho are returning to see that the small streams that their own young

agement guidelines took longer than anyone could have anticipated. The Provincial Government is still studying Ecosystem-based Management, it's costs and associated impacts, and will decide this winter whether to support and facilitate its implementation coast-wide, or reject the consensus recommendations of stakeholders .

During negotiations and planning processes, however, the logging companies and environmentalists agreed that the protection of high value fish habitat, endangered plant communities, and some key rare and sensitive ecosystem types was critical in the immediate term. For

Salmon return to the Great Bear Rainforest to find logging practices the same

will need to survive are still being logged to their banks despite agreements to change the management of the Great Bear Rainforest.

In the past three years the guidelines to define this new type of forestry were detailed in a 75-page Ecosystem-based Management Handbook. While the long-term commitment to Ecosystem-based Management and the adoption of the handbook is intended to apply throughout the Great Bear Rainforest these paper agreements have not yet translated to reality on the ground.

Change takes time, and the development of Ecosystem-based Man-

this reason, a voluntary one-year Ecosystem-based Management transition strategy was developed to deal with these pressing issues. While negotiations between the Province and First Nations are still underway, and the Management Council is not yet established, the parties agreed that irrespective of these other steps, the voluntary commitments would be implemented in the time frame stipulated. While some improvement has been made with regards to data sharing between logging companies and the protection of endangered plant communities the progress towards implementing even the most basic elements of Ecosystem-based Management is staggeringly slow.

The protection of high value fish habitat is perhaps the most glaring example of the dismal follow-through on these commitments. For years, environmentalists have been pointing out the lack of protection for fish habitat in the Great Bear Rainforest. To date, even though the agreements state that high value fish habitat, such as small streams that do not freeze over and side channels used for rearing, will be reserved starting March 31st, 2004 there have been no meaningful changes to the lack of protection for small fish bearing streams.

The commitment to Ecosystem-based Management, as well as the setting aside of protected areas, was paramount to agreements reached in 2001 and again at the end of 2003. The protected areas alone are not enough to secure the future of the Great Bear Rainforest. The full and effective application of new logging methods is essential.

The eggs left by the spawning coho this fall will be hatching in April, just as the one-year transition phase ends. We will be watching closely to make sure that, as agreed, the habitat of these young coho will be protected.

Photo: Terry Brown



Authors counter recent media spin on Canadian forest regulations report

Recently the Forest Products Association of Canada and the British Columbia Market Outreach Network commissioned a report entitled, "How Canada compares: International Review of Forest Policy and Regulations". The report was produced by Yale University Professor Dr. Ben Cashore and associates through International Forest Resources.

Media reports based on the client's and government's press release have seriously misrepresented the report's findings (B.C. Forest laws among the most stringent on earth!" British Columbia Ministry of Forests, July 16th, 2004). The distortion got to the point where the authors themselves had to put out a press release and response to the mischaracterization of their conclusions (see www.ifor.ca/for for more info).

The following three questions sum up the limits to this recent report and the unfounded claim that Canada is the best forest practitioner of the world.

Q: Does the report find that Canada has the best international forest practices?

A: "Nowhere in the report is it stated that BC or Canada have the 'best' forest practices...[the report] should not be taken as a comprehensive analysis of all forest policies either within the countries covered or across the entire globe" – Dr. McDermott, co-author.

Q: Does the report look at on-the-ground implementation or environmental impacts?

A: No. In fact the report clearly states that future research is required to truly understand

the results of government policy choices.

Q: Is the report based on an assessment of British Columbia's now-abandoned Forest Practices Code or does it assess the newly established, results-based Forest and Range Practices Act?

A: The report findings are already outdated with analysis in British Columbia focused on the now obsolete prescriptive management criteria of the Forest Practices Code. In fact, if the report were updated, "BC's ranking would be lowered by the Forest and Range Practices Act" – Dr.Cashore and Dr.McDermott, authors

Canadian magazines go ancient forest friendly.

Canadian Geographic, Harrowsmith, Country Life and The Walrus were among 34 Canadian magazines announcing their commitment to adopt Ancient Forest Friendly policies this June.

The well-known Canadian magazines joined with Markets Initiative, a coalition project of Greenpeace and others, in making the announcement. The parties had worked together in the development of printing and purchasing policies that would shift the magazines away from any use of fibre from ancient and endangered forests.

At the same time, the Canadian Magazine Publishers Association and the B.C. Association of Magazine Publishers partnered with Markets Initiative in the release of a "Coated Paper Eco Kit" designed to guide and help publishers and printers in the implementation of forest friendly policies.

Markets Initiative honour role of responsible paper users now includes the magazine publishers and 71 book publishers across Canada. The Ancient Forest Friendly initiative also has the support of many of Canada's leading writers including Margaret Atwood and Michael Ondaatje (author of *The English Patient*) and a similar initiative has the support of 60 small US book publishers.

Internationally, Greenpeace is continuing to work with publishers in the adoption of ancient forest-friendly policies in 7 European countries and recently 14 Dutch publishers made similar commitments. As global public concern

for the escalating loss of species and the destruction of habitat continues to rise, so too does the market for "good" wood and paper products. Also growing is consumer appreciation and support for companies on a sustainable path.

For more information visit the Markets Initiative web site at www.oldgrowthfree.com

Who's gone ancient forest friendly?

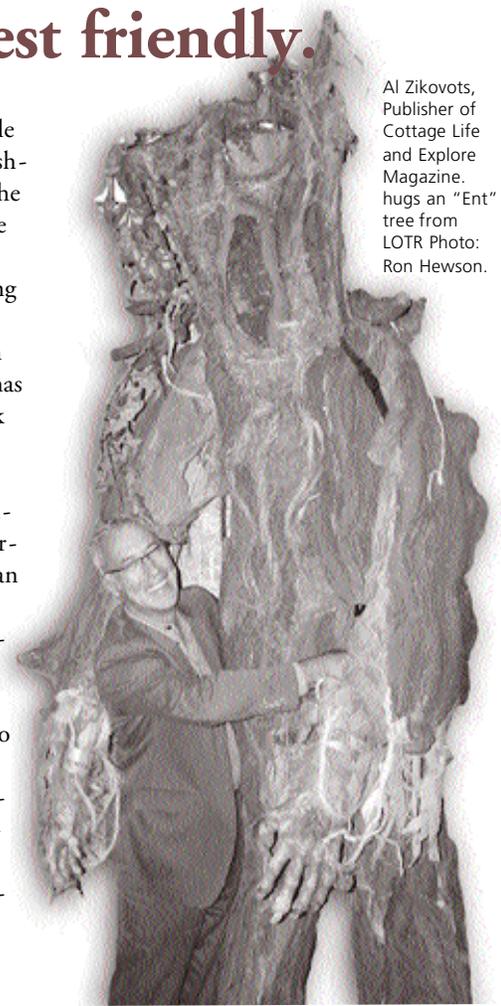
34 Canadian Magazine Publishers

71 Canadian Book Publishers

60 American Book Publishers

14 Dutch Book Publishers

and the trend is spreading in 7 other European Countries



Al Zikovots, Publisher of Cottage Life and Explore Magazine, hugs an "Ent" tree from LOTR Photo: Ron Hewson.

ECOTOURISM HAS INTERESTING IMPACT ON GRIZZLY BEAR BEHAVIOURS

Scientists studying grizzly bears in a part of the Great Bear Rainforest popular with eco-tourists have discovered that eco-tourism may be contributing to grizzly survival, at least in the short term.

Bear viewing in the Knight Inlet area is regulated, with tours arriving and departing the viewing platforms at the same times every day. Female bears with young cubs have adapted their fishing pattern to coincide with the presence of the tourists.

It appears aggressive and dominant male grizzlies actively avoid the cameras. Since male grizzlies also occupy the best fishing sites and will sometimes attack and kill cubs, their absence is having two observed effects: a higher chance of cub survival and female bears who spend less time watching for danger and more time feeding. The healthier and more robust the female is, the larger her next litter is likely to be.

The long-term impact of human tourist schedules altering grizzly populations and behavior patterns is unknown, of course. The scientists' findings will be published in the summer issue of the journal "Biological Conservation".

photo: Ian McAllister/Raincoast



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Great Bear Rainforest (continued from front page)

them. This reduction in protection areas almost blew the consensus apart.

Almost – but it held together. Instead of objecting, environmental group participants stood aside on this issue, allowing the table to come to consensus. This position was only acceptable because it was agreed by all parties that the conservation of biological values would be the primary purpose of these mining-allowed "Biodiversity Areas". If a mine were to be proposed, the proponents would have to adhere to truly rigorous and fully implemented standards to protect the natural values in the areas. Ecosystem-based Management, stakeholders agreed, would apply to all potential developments in the rainforest.

But somehow, that agreement was lost in the Government's announcement. The agreed nature of Biodiversity Areas is one of the keystones holding the central coast consensus in place and critical to Greenpeace's support for the plan.

This definition of Biodiversity Areas is the major, outstanding issue preventing a full north-coast consensus among stakeholders at that planning process.

"Business-as-usual" practices in Biodiversity Areas for everything but forestry and hydro dams is not a definition Greenpeace can support.

So at this time, there is no concrete Provincial commitment to EBM, no indication the Province will accept the agreed central coast definition of Biodiversity Areas, and no firm funding commitment from either the B.C. or the Canadian government towards Conservation Financing.

Peace in the woods – and in the markets – has held in much of BC's coastal rainforests for almost four years. The deferral on logging the larger pristine valleys in the Great Bear has stood firm. The warring

factions have hunkered down in dreary meeting rooms and hammered out a central coast consensus. It's not a final agreement – it's a set of recommendations to two levels of government – the Province and the First Nations.

It has been understood for years that these two levels of government would receive the stakeholder recommendations, and then engage in government-to-government negotiations. Together, they would decide the future of this region. And Greenpeace and other environmental groups would decide whether we could support the final outcomes.

Concerns are mounting, however, that the Liberal Government is not treating this process as a negotiation between governments, but rather an obligatory "consultation" exercise in which First Nation concerns may be heard – but will not necessarily be addressed in any meaningful way.

Greenpeace can support the central coast recommendation package, despite our very real concerns, because we believe that if all elements are fully implemented it provides the framework for a workable solution.

What we cannot support is a small Spirit Bear Conservancy, only twenty-two per cent full protection plus a fancy name for "business-as-usual" mining zones, negotiations with First Nations that aren't negotiations in any real sense, and a government public relations campaign that then tells the world the Great Bear Rainforest is protected – when it isn't.

We still have a chance to carve a wise and sustainable path for B.C.'s future. It remains to be seen whether the Liberal Government and the forest industry's decisions will lead to healthy ecosystems and healthy communities, or a reluctant return to conflict.

www.greenpeace.org

The Rainforest Solutions Project (the environmental coalition of Greenpeace, Sierra Club, ForestEthics and Rainforest Action Network) website provides up-to-date information on the evolving Great Bear Rainforest agreement. The site is updated regularly whenever new developments affecting the Great Bear Rainforest occur, and can be viewed at:

www.savethegreatbear.org