

Presentation to the Old Growth Panel - Carole Tootill

In 2014, I finally moved back to B.C. to return to the wilderness I spent over a quarter century longing for, and I became distraught seeing what had become of the mountains and valleys I loved. Instead of protected spaces, I found tree farms, denuded space, and vast areas of what looked like war zones – original forests had been gutted. Logs left flailed all over the Island, logs piled for slash burning. The smell from slash burning in the fall made me feel sick and not want to venture from home. In the fall of 2017, I drove up Nanaimo Lakes Road – valley after valley was on fire, the smell choking. Driving up and down criss-crossing the Island on and off dirt roads confirmed the damage. Vancouver Island has been denuded.

I grew up in Supernatural B.C. as reflected in the Beautiful B.C. magazine – vast untouched wilderness outside of every city. Now? Hard to take a photo without a clear cut or ecological disfigurement of a tree plantation. Even tourists are becoming disappointed – B.C. is no longer full of beautiful untouched wilderness.

The forests were stolen from all of us, especially harming the First Peoples whose culture, language, food source, spirituality – their way of life -depends. It is no secret that the loss of their habitat and corralling them into urban environments and residential school prisons destroyed their families, culture, and lives, and yet, knowing how dependent on old growth for who they are as a people, logging it continues. At a gathering to celebrate Tribal Canoe Journeys and debut “Medicine of the Cedar” at Nanaimo’s Port Theatre in July, a leading First Nations panel member noted old growth logging as a huge obstacle to the healing of First Nations people. He talked about the harm being inflicted by the loss of old growth (loss of medicine, healing practices, traditions). Youth of the Canoe Journeys – kids in foster care, vulnerable kids displaced from their cultures, communities, and families - found place, purpose, and safety in a journey that started with making the canoe. Yet, rather than protect forests with trees needed for such vital cultural endeavours, even the courts award corporate profit over the health of First Nations communities and their youth (i.e. last month’s ruling to log the “culturally and archaeologically significant” Tlaga Gaawtlaas Blue Jackets area near Masset <https://www.thenorthernview.com/news/logging-moves-forward-as-court-rules-against-haida-gwaii-protesters/>, this on top recent rulings that allowed cultural trees to continue to be logged before legality of the permits were determined AND with the company openly admitting to taking far too much <https://www.thestar.com/vancouver/2018/07/05/bc-court-decides-company-can-continue-logging-centuries-old-cedar.html>). Cultural cedars - the Tree of Life, an important source for ritual, healing, prayer, transportation, utensils, trade, and clothing to coastal communities – are logged to profit very few at the expense of entire indigenous nations.

A review panel report examining “death among children and youth” presented to B.C.’s Chief Coroner in 2018 and released to the public August 15, 2018, stated “that Indigenous children and youth were disproportionately represented among suicide deaths.... Indigenous youth may experience greater challenges due to the impact of historical trauma and current experiences that wear down their resiliency and ability to cope” (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/birth-adoption-death-marriage-and-divorce/deaths/coroners-service/child-death-review-unit/reports-publications/youth_suicide_drp_report_2018.pdf). Indigenous youth need their old growth forests to experience their journeys and rights of passage, spiritual development, psychological growth, food, and survival.

Bella Bella’s control of environmental resources and health services incorporating back to the land programs stopped teen suicide and increased graduation from 2% in the 70s to more 85% in 2016.

“We needed to get families living once again in ways that reflect the way our ancestors did”

<https://www.macleans.ca/news/bella-bella-the-town-that-solved-suicide/>

The band’s resource management plan carves out 50 per cent of Heiltsuk territory as a conservancy, safeguarding it from all industrial activity. The remaining 50 per cent is governed by an ecosystem-based management plan, which protects sacred, medicinal and unique sites from logging, mining, fishing and aquaculture projects.

Compare this to how First Nations lands have been denuded by logging, salmon lost or depleted, wildlife dwindling or extinct because of habitat harvesting. The effect on peoples reliant on nature should be undeniable.

The lack of legislation and action to protect old growth forests parallels the lack of legislation and genuine action on reconciliation which disempowers aboriginal peoples, particularly their young who have less and less nature in which to find themselves and feel empowered. Corporate profits over community and child welfare continues; the right to log even supersedes the right to clean water as residents of Glade learned in the court last summer (the right to clean drinking water is less important than the right to log, and the public can pay for water treatment). But “land back” is big, and disenfranchised youth – aboriginal and otherwise – are rising. It is time to take their lives and world seriously – that requires adults safeguarding the natural world and government staff acting in the public interest, something BCTS is incapable of doing.

The timber industry has wiped out important chunks of B.C.’s natural history - we won’t know all the creatures and plants lost. First Nations elders say much medicine has been lost, but our government has never known all that we had in the way of plants, medicines, and wildlife and still handed our bio dense forests to be managed through “Professional Reliance,” a complete sham. There has been no management, only liquidation. Unlike Scandinavian countries that profitably inventory their trees and logs, our government leaves industry to be the honest keepers of knowledge. There is no inventory standard or mandatory tallying – entirely unacceptable and guaranteed to never attain value – ecological or financial – for our treasured forest resource. What business sells product without full inventory and thorough knowledge of its value?

“... some 42 per cent of the province’s forest has not been inventoried since 1990. An astonishing 30 per cent hasn’t been inventoried in more than three decades since 1980. ...such fundamental uncertainty about how much forest, of what type, we have standing in B.C.”

<https://thetyee.ca/News/2012/07/05/BCCarbonMapLessons/>

Compare the ever-de-escalating volume of our timber to that of Sweden:

Sweden’s annual tree growth in managed forests is well over double that in BC. Repeat: Sweden has an equivalent area of forest land and gets twice the growth that we achieve. Is there some-thing we can learn here? Sweden manages their lands in a scientific manner. We do not. The standing stock in Swedish forests has increased dramatically from 2,300,000,000 cubic metres in 1950 to 3,900,000,000 cubic metres in recent years. BC forests have been in constant decline. Sweden’s success has been achieved by satisfactorily stocking, thinning and intensively managing their forests. Let’s be clear—there is huge payback from thoughtful, scientific management, pay-back that we in BC have never seen and never will if we continue our reckless course of liquidation.

https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/BC%20Office/2018/01/CCPA-BC_RestoringForestry_web.pdf

Since our temperate rainforests are “globally rare ecosystems covering just one-half of one percent of the planet’s landmass,” valuable beyond anything gained for harvest, logic would dictate the necessity

of preserving this irreplaceable treasure for tourism, adventure, food foraging and harvesting, forest bathing, wildlife habitat, fish runs, fresh air, temperate climate, clean water, flood retention, and future generations. Our old-growth forests are priceless, yet an industry that provides a billion a year in revenue to the B.C. government - \$992 million in 2017/2018 and again in 2018/2019, a drop in the bucket of B.C.'s \$52 or \$54 billion budget - is priority.¹ Although the B.C. budget will increase, forestry revenues are expected to decrease.² Compare this to tourism's 2017 tax revenue of \$1.2 billion and the \$9 billion tourism added to our GDP, five times more than the \$1.8 billion of "Forestry & Logging."³ In 2018, Forestry, Agriculture, Fishing and Hunting combined amounted to a mere 2.36% of B.C.'s GDP!⁴

It was expected to cost taxpayers nearly \$1.3 billion dollars to run the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development in the 2017/18 fiscal year (and another \$173 million to run the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy), but the \$992 revenue from the timber industry did not cover FLNRORD operation let alone contribute to Climate Change Strategy! FLNRORD is expected to cost about \$200,000 less over each of the next two fiscal years, with forestry revenues **predicted** to cover cost to run the cost of both Ministries.² Very optimistic, and none of this accounts for the massive expenditures communities must cover to pay for water treatment and flood damage. Future costs of drought from deforestation and having to deal with nutrient depleted and toxin-loaded lands under glyphosate-sprayed monocrop tree plantations are not considered, the upcoming costs conveniently ignored just like the industry's overwhelming carbon emissions.

Sweden, half the size of B.C., produces twice the volume of marketable wood and operates very profitably. B.C., having allowed its vast resource to be squandered, does not have a profitable industry. The public is subsidizing the sector now, let alone the future with all the issues poor industry practices have and will cause.

In the 2016/2017 budget year where FLNRORD operated on \$891 million, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture operated on a mere \$134 million (p. 114).² So, a sector that provides over 5 times the revenue was afforded 15% of the investment in a Ministry that logs the wilderness tourism relies on. Normally the Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture is allocated a mere 10% of FLNRORD's budget. Tourism is booming largely because true wilderness is a commodity more and more people want and need in order to rejuvenate, forest bathe, forage for mushrooms and all sorts of herbs and edibles, breath fresh air, experience pristine water and wilderness, view wildlife, hike, camp, refresh and regenerate, hunt, fish, and heal psychologically and physically from stressful urban lifestyles. The overcrowding in many parks is common knowledge, yet this province continues to log that which attracts local and foreign tourists. Investment should serve the public and be allocated accordingly. And then there is the issue of timber industry control of access to areas desired by hikers and ecotourists...

We need our forests for another fast-growing sector – film! The fastest growing sector in B.C. is technology, and the young talent that industry needs to recruit wants access to culture and wilderness!

Clearcutting rare endangered forests that provide revenue options, climate benefits, and savings needs to stop immediately. Not only is B.C. down to 10% of the huge valley bottom ancient elders so relished by industry and so necessary to mitigate climate disaster (less on Vancouver Island), the real costs of old growth "harvesting" – ever-increasing volume and intensity of forest fires, floods, landslides, loss of salmon runs and wildlife, diminished biodiversity, polluted air and water - are just

starting to add up. Nanaimo recently spent \$73 million on a state-of-the-art water filtration system. It wasn't needed when old-growth forests flanked the privately-owned water supply, absorbed downpours, and filtered drinking water. The Comox Valley Water Treatment facility will cost at least \$126 million. Ladysmith's will cost over \$13 million (https://www.ladysmith.ca/docs/default-source/reports/tol-info-sheet-mar1-2017-print.pdf?sfvrsn=9ff1efdb_0). Water turbidity is becoming a huge health issue – natural old growth water filtration and flood absorption is gone.

Taxpayers are helping traumatized Grand Forks citizenry with \$50 million dollars towards infrastructure and buying-out homes at post-flood value.⁵ 2500 homes had to be evacuated.⁶ As for the logging that, at minimum, exacerbated the flooding, it's business as usual: "British Columbia's Ministry of Forests... continues to approve high logging rates while doing little to understand their cumulative effects." (<https://thenarwhal.ca/sprawling-clearcuts-among-reasons-for-b-c-s-monster-spring-floods/>). Clearly, the future costs to mitigate logging damage continues to mount. And we don't know the effects and costs of losing our greatest coolant, moisture retainer, and climate regulator, but they will be serious. Herb Hammond, forest ecologist and forester, states that "We do know [old growth forests] provide the highest quality water filtration, the best water storage and flooding retention, ... and carbon retention, yet we cut them." Logging old growth is nothing less than a massively irresponsible mistake and climate crime.

Compound the lack of inventory with the lack of remaining old growth and primary intact forest (secondary forest with old growth characteristics), the need to stop clear cut logging and restore our forests as a main climate change mitigation strategy becomes clear! Yet old growth logging continues at a rate of 140,000 hectares a year, about one Stanley Park or 500 soccer fields a day! (<https://sierraclub.bc.ca/rainforestisland/>)

The timber industry is our biggest source of carbon emissions – our old growth forests could and should be storing and sequestering the emissions this province produces. They used to. Immediately stopping old growth logging and emulating old growth characteristics in forests not decimated by tree farming is needed urgently to provide future generations with a liveable environment. We cannot afford another year of losing an area of old growth 25% bigger than that of Stanley Park **every day**. Our old growth forests are the greatest, most effective climate catastrophe preventor we have, and this government is squandering the last of it.

B.C.'s temperate rainforests are among the most bio dense on the planet, and they store massive amounts of carbon - the bigger the trees, the more carbon stored and sequestered. Logging releases massive amounts of carbon from trees and biomass under the ground. Slash burning releases huge amounts of carbon dioxide as does blasting and clearing for road building. The following excerpt from **B.C. Forests Wake Up Call: Heavy Carbon Losses Hit 10 Year Mark** shows how forestry practices changed our forests from being a powerful carbon sink to a carbon emitter:

B.C.'s forest functioned as a carbon sink until 2002, likely since the end of the last ice age.

B.C.'s forest carbon emissions are not counted as part of the official greenhouse gas emissions of the province. Instead these emissions are reported as a 'memo' item and tend to be ignored, despite their alarming growth.... While B.C.'s forest carbon loss has been made worse by the Mountain Pine Beetle outbreak and... serious wildfire years, the biggest factors remain poor forest management and destructive logging practices like clear-cutting of old-growth rainforest and slash-burning.

Emissions from logging and slash burning alone were 577 million tonnes of carbon dioxide in the period 2003-2012. This number is close to B.C.'s entire official emissions during the same 10 year period (638 million tonnes).⁷

"Forests fix and store huge amounts of carbon, and forestry is by far the biggest source of carbon emissions in BC."⁸ Forestry emissions surpass every other industry combined, but they are not accounted for. So, if CO₂ from logging and slash burning are close to B.C.'s "official emissions" of approximately 64 million tonnes a year (64.5 in 2017⁹), our true emissions are double. Is any other industry given such license?

As official stats do not include wildfires, real 2017 and 2018 emissions are likely triple anything official.¹⁰ Unsustainable logging exacerbate wildfires: massive clear-cuts and the spraying of glyphosate and other herbicides damage the environment, dehydrate the lush ecology, and create fire-starter. Forests with thousand-year-old trees will not just grow back. Living carbon turns into carbon emissions when logged and wood products continue to release carbon.

Five years ago, the U.N. predicted 60 years of arable land left at the rate it is being depleted: "Generating three centimeters of top soil takes 1,000 years, and if current rates of degradation continue all of the world's top soil could be gone within 60 years...."¹¹ Our natural ancient forests have been compacting natural fertilizer from animals, arthropods, fallen trees, and dead plants to build up incredibly rich nutrient-dense moist underground, "thousands of years of living and dying" (Herb Hammond interview), and now feed tree plantations. For how much longer, nobody knows. That underground wealth is being depleted by plantations that harvest in decades – not the centuries or millennia it took to develop. Old growth does not grow back. Once logged, its life-supporting climate-disaster mitigating functions are gone.

Dr. Richard Hebda of the University of Victoria explains the global importance of our old-growth forests in storing and sequestering carbon in this short video <https://sierraclub.bc.ca/vancouver-island-old-growth-logging-speeding-up/>:

We have some of the most amazing forests on earth, and these forests - I am standing in one here in Francis King Park - store a 1000 tons per hectare of carbon. One of the most carbon-rich forest ecosystems in the world are here in British Columbia and on Vancouver Island, and we need these forests because it is these trees that, essentially for free, remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and turn it into living carbon, which then dies and becomes dead carbon on the ground. As we remove those forests, especially the old-growth forests with such huge amounts of carbon stored in them, we contribute to climate change through that activity because somewhere in the range of 25 to 30% carbon going into the atmosphere... comes from the disruption of global forests, including the forests of British Columbia... (January, 2018)

The bigger the trees, the greater the carbon storage. "...almost 70 per cent of all the carbon stored in trees is accumulated in the last half of their lives" (<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/how-old-trees-help-climate-1.4252888>). Global forests "[have] the potential to take up some 30 per cent of atmospheric CO₂ emissions" (<http://www.futuredirections.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/The-Role-of-Old-Growth-Forest-in-Carbon-Sequestration-FINAL.pdf>). "The PNAS [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences] paper says that natural climate solutions can deliver 37% of cost-effective carbon dioxide mitigation needed by 2030 for a greater than 66% chance of holding global warming below 2°C this

century. This is alongside the existing carbon sink provided by intact ecosystems, which is already absorbing over 25% of human greenhouse gas emissions, and which we must protect from damage by human activities” (<https://nature4climate.org/about/> / <https://www.pnas.org/content/114/44/11645>). Forests currently sequester about 30% of the world’s carbon output. Ancient old growth forests need to be protected and restored to mitigate the climate crisis locally and globally. The volume of carbon released by clear cutting old growth is a climate crime.

Since the industrial revolution, humans have added [around 300 billion tons](#) of extra carbon to the atmosphere -- mainly through burning fossil fuels -- which is heating the planet to dangerous levels. But trees naturally remove carbon from the atmosphere, storing it above and below ground.

[A new study](#) [Restoring forests as a means to many ends, July 5, 2019], carried out by researchers at Swiss university ETH Zurich and published in the journal Science, has calculated that restoring degraded forests all over the world could capture about 205 billion tons of carbon in total. Global carbon emissions are currently around 10 billion tons per year. (<https://www.cnn.com/2019/07/04/world/forests-capture-two-thirds-of-carbon-emissions-science-intl/index.html>)

The world could be saved, and B.C. could take the lead and turn this juggernaut around immediately through an administrative process.

<https://hashilthsa.com/news/2019-11-29/finding-solitude-local-filmmakers-debut-their-first-film-sold-out-audiences> “ When these ancestral gardens are cut, we lose a lot more than just wood. We lose a lot more than just medicines and food – it’s a whole way of life... it impacts the whole world and we see that now in deforestation that’s happening the world over.”

All the talk of ecological restoration and the need to plant trees, and here we are, deliberately taking down the very best, our greatest defense, and the most effective weapon available to combat the dramatic changes we know are coming. There is nothing better or cheaper than old growth and primary forests to help us.

Selfish irresponsible resource extraction creating bleak futures for our young who already suffer from depression, anxiety, suicide, and dysfunction as never before. Like so many, I am angry at government, industry, and the professionals supposedly managing our forests and looking out for the public interest.

Far too many people have become completely disengaged or entirely focused on another issue – they have given up fighting for forests because it is too depressing and frustrating. In the 1990s, the thought of logging in the Schmidt Creek area would cause protest and hundreds of letters. A moratorium on logging protected the area in the 1990s, but steep-slope logging near orca rubbing beaches has resumed, sanctioned by BCTS, the rogue agency allowed to violate its own mandate. This wouldn’t be allowed decades ago. Nor would logging of watersheds and old growth firebreaks, but now? Anything goes. Timber companies get to block forest access, threaten the public with persecution for trespassing, take the best and burn the rest, export the spoils, spray with toxic glyphosate, and monocrop farm. Our climate is getting drier and forest fires more intense because our great climate regulating system is fragmented and, for the most part, decimated.

This is the fifth related survey process I have been involved in since July. It is time to stop the obvious delay tactic of “talk and log.” Industry has won, 10% or less of this treasured valley bottom resource remains. The Island has even less. The public shouldn’t have to keep fighting to save fragmented leftovers. 30% of Vancouver Island’s remaining old growth was logged between 1990 and 2015, more than 1% each year and three times the rate of primary forest removal in tropical regions (<http://www.timescolonist.com/news/local/loss-of-old-growth-faster-than-for-tropical-rainforest-sierra-club-of-b-c-1.14871002>)! Logging used to occur “in less than one-third of one per cent of B.C.’s forests each year” (British Columbia’s Forests A geographical snapshot, September 2003 – removed from the provincial website!). Obviously, everything went wrong in 2003 with the implementation of “Professional Reliance” and creation of BCTS.

And what about wildlife (fauna and flora)? Completely overlooked as if they do not matter. We wipe out wolves and kill cougars to protect dying caribou herds, but we still log the old growth their very lives depend on. In his November 2008 letter, John Doyle, then Auditor General of B.C., noted that “A recent comprehensive assessment of BC’s biodiversity estimated that there are approximately 1600 species at risk in BC today and that approximately 43% of BC’s assessed species are at risk.” (http://www.elc.uvic.ca/press/documents/Endangered%20Species%20Submission-Nov25.08_E-FINAL.pdf) A few years later, the number of species at risk was 1900 (http://protectbiodiversity.ca/images/uploads/reports/2012_bc-species-paper-web_1.pdf). As habitat is destroyed and degraded, the numbers climb.

The world is waking up to the loss of our old growth forests. Even realtors acknowledge this reality:

One of the world’s few remaining old-growth temperate rainforests, it is the home of coastal wolves, black bears, grizzlies and the unique Kermode “Spirit Bear.”

<https://www.landquest.com/detailmain.aspx?propid=19283> Dec. 12, 2019

As for BCTS auctioning old growth abutting the Juan de Fuca trail? Just the latest outrage of a rogue agency with no oversight and accountability. Shut it down!

Immediately stop old growth logging, adhere to scientific ecosystem-based management, and start restoring our forests so they can function as proper ecosystems.

We are all deprived of ability to forest bath, physically and psychologically regenerate, refresh spiritually, and enjoy fresh water, clean air, forest foraging, and the wonders in the wild. Logging ancient old growth is a huge human rights issue, a crime against humanity, and complete ecocide.

The **assault** on remaining **old growth** needs to **STOP IMMEDIATELY!** Reforestation mimicking old growth characteristics needs urgent implementation. Not only will our grandchildren have an ecosystem to sustain them, but solid AND necessary jobs could be provided to unemployed industry workers.

FOOTNOTES:

¹ Budget 2018 Working for You, Budget and Fiscal Plan 2018/2019 – 2020/2021, https://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/bfp/2018_Budget_and_Fiscal_Plan.pdf, p. 18-19 Table 1.10 Revenue by Source and Table 1.11 Expense by Ministry: Compare forest revenue on p.18 to FLNRORD budget on p. 19.

² Budget 2018 Working for You, Budget and Fiscal Plan 2018/2019 – 2020/2021, https://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/bfp/2018_Budget_and_Fiscal_Plan.pdf, P. 113-114. Costs of community water treatment, flood mitigation, road restoration, etc. are not accounted for.

³ https://www.destinationbc.ca/content/uploads/2019/10/Value-of-Tourism_Full-Report-2017.pdf
p. 4 Contributing \$9 billion to GDP compared to logging and forestry's \$1.8 billion and provincial tax revenue of \$1.2 billion

⁴ Statista, GDP distribution of British Columbia Canada 2018, by industry, https://www.statista.com/statistics/608359/gdp-distribution-of-british-columbia-canada-by-industry/?fbclid=IwAR270NoFLN7IA5_o2gZQVOabykjuQNafSIXpZMwgoZLtOXzN3N3Xofm502E

⁵ Lirette, Dominika. 'We were shocked': Grand Forks residents brace for home buyouts at post-flood values', July 3, 2019, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/grand-forks-houses-assessed-post-flood-value-buyout-1.5197831>

⁶ <https://www.nelsonstar.com/news/one-year-later-5-2m-used-to-help-grand-forks-families-after-devastating-floods/>

⁷ Jens Wieting, B.C. Forests Wake Up Call: Heavy Carbon Losses Hit 10 Year Mark, June 2015, https://sierraclub.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Forest-Emissions-Detailed-Backgrounder_June22.pdf p.1

⁸ Pojar, Dr. Jim. Carbon Black is the new green(wash), Feb.27, 2019, <https://www.interior-news.com/opinion/carbon-black-is-the-new-greenwash/>

⁹ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/climate-change/data/provincial-inventory>

¹⁰ Hernandez, Jon, and Lovgreen, Tina. Wildfire Emissions Grow to Triple B.C.'s Annual Footprint, August 24, 2017, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/it-s-alarming-wildfire-emissions-grow-to-triple-b-c-s-annual-carbon-footprint-1.4259306;>

Jones, Ryan Patrick. B.C. Forests contribute 'hidden' carbon emissions that dwarf official numbers, report says, January 28, 2019, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/sierra-club-report-forest-carbon-emissions-1.4995191>

¹¹ Arsenaut, Chris. Dec.5, 2014, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/only-60-years-of-farming-left-if-soil-degradation-continues/>

NOTES AND THOUGHTS:

Moss mats 100-150 years just to get established and grow, current rotations do not allow vegetation to grow back to nourish endangered ungulates and other wildlife

B.C.'s old growth forests are a public treasure. People come from all over the world to experience a natural forest, especially the low-elevation kind with giant trees, some of the most bio dense ecology on the planet. Europeans and Asians pay big money to forest bath.

At a mere 300 hectares, the iconic Cathedral Grove is ¼ the size of Stanley Park: tiny, overcrowded, not much nature left, and vulnerable to blow down thanks to surrounding logging. And this is considered a treasure? Compare to lands" owned" by WFP, TimberWest, and Island Timberlands.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2019/jun/08/forest-bathing-japanese-practice-in-west-wellbeing>

Shinrin-yoku was developed in the 1980s in [Japan](#). Although people had been taking walks in the country's forests for centuries, new studies showed that such activity could reduce blood pressure, lower cortisol levels and improve concentration and memory. A chemical released by trees and plants, called phytoncides, was found to boost the immune system. As more research highlighted the benefits of shinrin-yoku, the Japanese government incorporated it into the country's health programme.

According to this article, British doctors are on the verge of prescribing forest bathing. B.C. could have the best forests to bath in – lush, clean, unpolluted, pure water, abundant fish and wildlife, vibrant, beautiful, refreshing – but so little remains, pathetic remnants of a once lush past.