

From: [FLNR Old Growth BC FLNR:EX](#)
To: [Old Growth Strategic Review](#)
Subject: FW: CORRECTION Old Growth public consultation written submission - C Bell
Date: Monday, February 3, 2020 9:37:33 AM
Importance: High

From: charlotte bell <charlottebell@shaw.ca>
Sent: January 31, 2020 5:22 AM
To: FLNR Old Growth BC FLNR:EX <Oldgrowthbc@gov.bc.ca>
Subject: CORRECTION Old Growth public consultation written submission - C Bell
Importance: High

Hello again Old Growth Strategic Review team

I have corrected a date in the text below.

As I am still before the deadline today – can you confirm that you have received and will use this corrected version?

Thank you
Charlotte Bell
charlottebell@shaw.ca

From: charlotte bell [<mailto:charlottebell@shaw.ca>]
Sent: January 30, 2020 11:46 PM
To: 'oldgrowthbc@gov.bc.ca'
Subject: Old Growth public consultation written submission - C Bell

Re: Old Growth Strategic Review 2020

To: Mr Garry Merkel and Mr Al Gorley
Please find below my written submission, approximately 950 words.
Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Charlotte Bell
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Victoria BC
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Introduction

I am a retired BC civil servant living in Victoria, BC. In the late 1970s I worked at the MacMillan-Bloedel Somass mill in Port Alberni. For the Province of BC I worked in the Ministry of Forests, Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, Integrated Land

Management Bureau and the Aboriginal relations ministry. In the early 2000s as a graduate student I participated in the Non Timber Forest Products demonstration project in Port McNeill area on Vancouver Island (sponsored by Royal Roads University and supported by Western Forest Products).

In this submission I would like to share some insights regarding old growth and related issues from a recent forestry tour, share some thoughts on what is happening in our forests and request a real strategy and concrete actions to maintain our mature/ old growth forests.

Examples from Vancouver Island

In June of 2019 I had the opportunity to go on a tour of southern and mid Vancouver Island. The tour focused on old growth but also forestry sustainability more generally, and was sponsored by Kairos. We had access to local government, First Nations representatives, ecosystem biologists, professionals and business people who are trying to maintain the wood industry on the Island.

A local businessman in Port Alberni who is trying to help establish an engineered wood products plant informed us that there is no longer any processing of second-growth timber in Port Alberni and that up to 75 truckloads of logs per day leave the valley for other mills. We met with the mayor of Port Alberni who also wanted to see solutions to the loss of jobs and the amount of old forest being cut and often shipped as whole logs.

We had the privilege of visiting some small areas of intact forest old growth including the Tlal-o-qui-aht Tribal Park on Meares Island and sites near Port Renfrew. The environmental, cultural, and tourism / economic potential for old growth preservation was evident, as was the essential role of First Nations in both ecosystem protection and forest management.

Thoughts on old growth preservation

Recently scientists have confirmed that old forests store more carbon than younger ones. While all forests help control climate, old forests provide not only local hydrology and temperature control, but also the carbon uptake and storage that will best offset climate change <https://www.nature.com/articles/nature07276>

The current Old Growth review public questionnaire unfortunately asks respondents to select three "most important" functions of mature forests, choosing among the topics of Timber, Spiritual, Tourism, Water, Habitat, Carbon storage and Biodiversity. These functions are all interdependent and the question needs to be "how will BC manage the complex interactions among forest ecology, economy and indigenous rights as climate change greatly limits the timeframe and options?"

Determining the size and location of more old growth reserves is imperative, but is not a strategy to address economic decline, biodiversity loss, climate resilience, or Indigenous land rights. The BC government has always been and will be under tremendous pressure to maintain profitable timber harvesting for industry and for rural jobs.

The decline in local timber processing

When I worked for MacMillan Bloedel in the late 1970s, there were over 1000 workers in my mill alone. Automation reduced some of the work force. In 2003 the BC Liberals removed the long-standing forest licensee appurtenancy requirements. That policy change, never altered by the current NDP government, is still in effect today. It continues to encourage raw log exports, and hamper the development of value-added lumber and wood industries on Vancouver Island. Even Private Managed Forest landowners such as Timberwest are not obligated to process forest products locally. Chronic employment instability in small communities is now exacerbated by impacts of climate change (pine beetle in the interior, cedar stress/die off on coast).

Some positive steps and experience to build on...

BC government could build on its extensive experience in strategic resource management, as well as in creating comprehensive agreements with First Nations that pertain to planning, environment and forestry. These initiatives and improvements will take time and have direct costs – as for further needed additions to Class A Parks (such as in the Walbran Valley) – and indirect such as restrictions on raw log exports that would incur employment transition costs.

...but concrete action needed today

BC is providing some individual tree protection, some park and habitat expansions. But we find ourselves now on the cusp of the end of substantial areas old and mature forests. Many of the small remaining areas do not have full legal protection (e.g. Meares Island).

BC government controls the rate and location of most of the logging in BC (through BCTS or licensee approval) and must take responsibility for the current situation (e.g. Nahmint valley) where loads of old growth are coming out of the woods every day. It would be very useful for the BC government to acknowledge its management choice (that old growth forest liquidation is justified to maintain today's harvest benefits and jobs) so that we can have an honest discussion of what to do next.

A rethink is needed: save forest biodiversity, slow climate crisis, create new jobs

The current status of forest-based Carbon Capture and Storage is not clear to the public. The BC Carbon Registry lists some projects (such in the Great Bear Rain Forest) that were originally validated before 2018 but now grandfathered under the Greenhouse Gas Industrial Reporting and Control Act transitional provision. More recently, Enhanced Carbon Sequestration is listed in the 2019 document Project Types and Desirable Outcomes. However it appears that an approved forest carbon storage Protocol (a requirement to participate in BC's offset program) does not yet exist.

Appropriate afforestation and reforestation, enhanced silviculture, park (including Tribal parks) expansions, and much stronger old forest protection in the working landscape could create new jobs in rural and First Nations communities while creating banks of old growth for the future. We need a mature forest strategy that can provide economic incentives through tourism industry, sustainable harvest, and creation of carbon credits. This current Old Growth consultation review should result

in a fresh and honest presentation to the public and all stakeholders including timber dependent towns as to what exactly the plan is - how will BC maintain healthy forest biodiversity in face of climate change.

END