



COWICHAN VALLEY NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

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To the two members of the Old Growth Strategic Review Panel,

On Vancouver Island we have now logged ~95% of "old growth" or ~99% of CDF. For a moment lets ignore the numbers game of exactly what constitutes "old growth" and how much is left. Is the current Forest Industry reliant on this source? Very soon this too will be logged.....and what then?

Old Growth forests are like "capital", and need to be left "in the bank" as caches of seed, and subjects of study about genetic and biological diversity. When will we stop drawing on this "capital"? Only very short-term thinking assigns them more value for cash dollars when placed on a foreign ship?

As Foresters yourselves, you will know that the replacement "forests" are essentially age/species monocultures. In such places species diversity is highly reduced and light in the understory is almost absent. The risk from disease, drought and fire is higher there - even without the effects of Climate Change.

How many generations of planting and harvesting will it take to *really* prove that we can "manage" that 95% in a way that is truly "renewable" and "sustainable"? How many generations of people will it take to convince BC residents and First Nations - the ultimate "owners"?

Whether 5% or 1% it is time we speak of "tree museums". Are we not obliged to future generations to keep enough examples of intact old growth for study at a minimum? What new species will we find? What interrelationships will we discover?

We call for an immediate halt on cutting of BC's endangered old-growth forests.
Please!

Yours Sincerely,

Carol Milo
Co-President

Gail Mitchell
Co-President