

To: oldgrowthbc@gov.bc.ca

Re: Old Growth Strategic Review

I reside in North Vancouver and am employed by Metro Vancouver Regional District as a Field Biologist in the protected Capilano, Seymour, and Coquitlam Watersheds. The opinions below are of a personal nature and do not necessarily represent those of Metro Vancouver Regional District.

In general, BC's forest management practices including those of BC Timber Sales place emphasis on the financial security of the current generations. This emphasis does not align with the long-term maintenance of ecosystem services required for the health of BC's future generations; and with the removal of BC's old-growth forest, comes corresponding declines in biodiversity and the provision of ecosystem services. Reductions of old-growth forest means reductions in air and water quality for future generations. Furthermore retention of ecosystem services associated with old-growth forest helps to reduce significant costs incurred for the development and maintenance of infrastructure to provide these services (eg. water filtration, air purification, temperature reduction).

Retention of old-growth forest offers significant opportunities for economic growth in the recreation and tourism sectors, which in time may replace the current economic benefits associated with removal of old-growth forest. Public interest and recognition of potential impacts to ecosystem services contributed to the Greater Vancouver Water District (an entity of Metro Vancouver Regional District) ceasing all logging activities including removal of old-growth forest within the protected Watersheds in 1999. Instead, recreational opportunities including trails and tours through old-growth forest are now offered.

Canada has encountered relatively similar conflicts in the past. Through the Cod fishing moratorium in Newfoundland, and extensive dialogue and negotiations associated with BC's Clayoquot Sound and the Great Bear Rainforest, conflicting environmental and economic views were ultimately addressed through diplomacy. Conditions of these agreements have included subsidies or retraining for those most impacted by the resulting changes. These changes occurred for the greater good of all Canadians.

As new knowledge is gained, cultures should evolve and change for the better. UNDRIP and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission have secured the importance of First Nations consultation, land management, and employment within BC's forest identity. BC faces a number of significant environmental challenges in the future, including climate change. Old-growth forests help to buffer us from these challenges, and if further protected and retained, can help to support the environmental and economic interests of British Columbians well into the future. I suggest BC's forestry legislation is significantly amended to immediately protect old-growth forest from further removal. Subsidies and retraining for those most impacted in the forestry industry should be provided. This amendment should be conducted in an expeditious manner so as to address the current rate of removal of old-growth forest.

Sincerely,



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Field Biologist

