



OUR DRINKING WATER WATERSHEDS

January 28th, 2019

At the outset...we want you to know that we are absolutely opposed to Old Growth Forests being cut down. BUT...along with the Old Growth, we have second and third growth that in fact protects the Old Growth from blow down and from dehydration if it too is left alone. Our Forests have such high value to us environmentally. They contain our history, our wildlife and our drinking water watersheds.

Our watersheds in British Columbia, were, back in time, called Forestry Reserves. This meant that there was absolutely no industrial activity of any kind that occurred in these "Reserves". We believe that someone, and perhaps it is this panel, needs to question government to ascertain when the changes were made and why they were made. We are of the opinion that if this designation had remained, our Old growth would have remained intact as well. This change in designation is a travesty! (See book or link <http://www.bctwa.org/McNeill-WisdomTyr-ExecSum.pdf> "From Wisdom to Tyranny" – author Will Koop)

Many of our problems on the Island are because of the change in designation noted above along with the giveaway of land through the E and N Land Grant. This is very clearly discussed in the research article; "Cutting the Island: Understanding the Impacts of a Private Forestland Regulatory Regime on Vancouver Island". (copy provided to Panel)

In addition, we have an absolutely wrong headed Private Managed Forest Land Act that is creating the decimation we are seeing and hearing about on our Island in particular. Section 21 of the PMFL Act must be removed if this Act is to stay in place. This section of the act says: "A local government must not do any of the following in respect land that is private managed forest land if doing so would have the effect of restricting directly or indirectly, a forest management activity.

a) Adopt a bylaw under any enactment."

This means that any city, regional district, municipality or township cannot control what happens on the land even though they are the ones responsible for providing clean drinking water! How does this make sense? It does not and it must be removed!

I need to go through, on behalf of VIWWC, some of the difficulties faced by various Island communities;

Our problems begin at the top of the Island where our Northern Resident Orca's return to Johnson Straight every year and have done so over the millennia. The Robson Byte is an area very close to shore where the Orca's rub on very small rocks to clean themselves. Right above the Byte are huge expanses of forests (old growth as well) where logging is now occurring. What this has the effect of doing is allowing mud and debris to now roll down the hill and into Robson Byte...thereby harming the very area that our Orcas utilize.

Further down the Island outside the little village of Sayward (Population 310) logging has been occurring at an alarming rate at the very top of the Village's watershed. Water has become clouded and there are now calls for the Village to build a water treatment facility. How can a village of this size afford to build a treatment facility that was completely unnecessary until the logging began?

Tahsis has the same issues that will affect them as well. Logging companies are wanting to go right in alongside this village and clear-cut the side of the mountain! The village is fighting back!

Comox has had boil water advisories off and on over the past number of years. The opinions are that this has occurred because of clear-cutting up in the area surrounding Comox Lake. They too have now been informed they must build a water treatment facility.

Port Alberni is next in line where McLaughlin Ridge is being cut to the bone. This ridge is right above the town's major drinking water source. The groups from here are also fighting back and are calling on VIHA to hold off on the issue of ordering the build of a treatment facility.

Nanaimo had a number of boil water advisories and the next thing we knew was, as taxpayers, we were forced to foot a bill of 78 million dollars to build a water treatment facility. All because of logging within our watershed!

Ladysmith has concerns about their dam that is threatening to burst because of the logging and no root systems to filter the water downwards into the ground.

Cowichan Valley has a myriad of problems associated with clear-cutting and the list goes on!

Youbou , where there once was a mill. Now Island Timberlands wants to go in and clear cut the side of the mountain that is directly above the town of Youbou. This is also where the Roosevelt Elk winter. If this cut is allowed, it will likely, when there is heavy rains or snows, bring the side of the mountain down onto this small town.

What must be recognized by this panel is that no one on the Island, other than Victoria, owns their Watersheds! They are all in private Forestry Company hands and thus our problems! The Private Managed Forest Land Act is a major travesty!

While we are NOT opposed to logging that is done sustainably, there is nothing sustainable about clear-cutting. What clear-cutting does is ignores the riparian setbacks, destroys salmon bearing streams, removes all cover for habitat, creates slides because there are no root systems left in place to hold back the earth and because of no root systems to filter the water, we wind up with cloudy water coming out of our taps...and then...we wind up with huge bills to build treatment facilities...none of which would have been necessary if the forests had been left intact!

The last travesty is a government that refuses to bring our resource sectors under their control. We have Acts that are in place, that do nothing to control the resource sector corporations. We have no monitoring occurring anywhere on what it is that is happening on the ground. We have a government agency (BCTS) that is operating out of control.....THIS is not the way it is supposed to be! Our government is **supposed** to be operating in the public interest. When will they begin???