LOGGING IT WILL BRING LITTLE ECONOMIC RETURN TO THE COMMUNITY

The Sunshine Coast Community Forest (SCCF) in conjunction with the District of Sechelt (DOS) holds the logging rights to the Wilson Creek Forest, also known as cutblock EW002. The DOS only receives a paltry $15,000 – $20,000 in annual dividends from SCCF logging operations, only a handful of short term jobs will be generated, the actual logging would be over within a week, and typically only a small percentage of the logs stay on the Coast to be used by local manufacturers. Its long term value as fish and animal habitat, for recreation, tourism, water management, and carbon sequestering has not been duly considered.

THE WILSON CREEK WATERSHED IS ALREADY OVERLOGGED

As the most heavily logged watershed on the lower Coast, the Wilson Creek watershed retains only 4% old growth and another 10% in mature forest, everything else has been logged and is either in a clearcut state or has been converted to immature tree farms never to be a natural forest again. The recent CSI clearcut, largest on the Coast, cuts through the middle of the watershed. How much more do we have to lose? Despite a SCCF sponsored hydrology report that expresses few concerns with continued logging, questions remain as to the accuracy of the report, given there is no hard data on the creek’s fluctuating water levels that many believe have been badly impacted by logging. The data used to determine water levels was collected from Roberts Creek and applied to Wilson Creek even though the Wilson Creek watershed has a higher level of forest cover loss, so the conclusions are speculative. A key recommendation of the report states that the SCCF should develop a long term plan to achieve a variety of forest stand ages, something that doesn’t currently exist in the Wilson Creek watershed. Logging this forest would NOT help accomplish that goal.

LOGGING THIS FOREST WILL DESTROY ITS RECREATIONAL USES AND TOURISM POTENTIAL

Many of us live here or visit because we love the outdoors and the forests. Let’s not compromise our quality of life by allowing our only significant low elevation forested area left on the lower Coast to be lost cutblock by cutblock. Wilson Creek Forest and the proposed park expansion area is part of are already heavily used by the community for year-round hiking, biking, horseback riding, nature observation and more, but once logged it will retain little of interest or beauty for us to enjoy. Preserving this area has huge tourism potential as well. A 2002 study commissioned by the province titled “Commercial and Public Recreation for the Sunshine Coast Forest District”, acknowledged the Coast forest industry had declined at the same time tourism had grown and was “strongly linked to back country experiences, fish, wildlife and other resource values.” Tourism demand for high quality outdoor recreational experiences is expected to continue to grow as population in the lower mainland increases and as worldwide demand grows. We can benefit from that trend.

BIODIVERSITY SUFFERS AS WE LOSE OUR REMNANT LOW ELEVATION FORESTS

There are flora and fauna that reside in the Wilson Creek Forest that will not flourish once it’s logged and converted to a tree farm. The diversity of life that currently exists will be greatly impoverished. A recent provincial government report states that “The Coastal Douglas-fir ecosystems are threatened province-wide, and that only 0% is protected in BC. With its dozens of mature and old growth Douglas-firs, protection of the Wilson Creek Forest would help safeguard this disappearing ecosystem. The Wilson Creek watershed is considered high value fish habitat but the number of salmon returning has declined greatly from historic levels and logging impacts are likely part of the problem. To see this forest for yourself, take a walk on the Wilson Creek Forest trail with its 20 informative Biodiversity Stops that reveal the complexity around you. Directions and a short video on the Wilson Creek Forest are on ELF’s website, www.loggingfocus.org

WILSON CREEK FOREST IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE PROPOSED MT. ELPHINSTONE PROVINCIAL PARK EXPANSION

This 1500 ha park expansion is badly needed. The current Mt. Elphinstone Provincial Park is only 149 ha and we currently have no sizable parks on the lower Coast below 600m. Though we have 3 large high elevation parks, they have limitations for year round recreational use, accessibility, and biodiversity protection. The Wilson Creek Forest and the larger proposed park it’s part of, are between Sechelt and Gibsons and borders the communities of Wilson and Roberts Czr., it’s right outside our back door. The Sunshine Coast Forest District has only 3% of its land designated Class A Provincial Park, while the rest of the province maintains an average of 13% - we’re getting short changed. With what looks to be a coming change in Provincial government, the Mt. Elphinstone Provincial Park expansion comes closer to becoming a reality, thus all logged Proposed within the boundaries needs to be deferred.

WHY THE WILSON CREEK FOREST DESERVES FULL PROTECTION NOW!

This beautiful low elevation 27ha forest directly above the community of Wilson Creek is one of the last remaining intact, natural forests left in the Wilson Creek Watershed and provides more long-term benefits to the community left standing than logged.

Here’s why...

We can always use donations and volunteers!