SECHELT COUNCIL, DON’T CUT DOWN OUR PARK

Sunshine Coast Community Forest is planning to log 3 cutblocks within the proposed Mt. Elphinstone Park Expansion area.

It’s up to us to say NO.

Even though the Ministry of Forests has promised to refrain from planning any cutblocks in the proposed Mt Elphinstone Park expansion area while the Province negotiates a Land Use Plan with with the shíshálh Nation, Sechelt’s own logging company is planning 3 more.

That would rob lower Sunshine Coast residents of our last and only chance for a substantial, low elevation, forested park. Please stand up for these irreplacable Elphinstone forests, and tell Sechelt Mayor and Council why they shouldn’t allow their destruction.

We need the Sechelt-owned Community Forest to reflect the needs of nature and the will of the larger Coast community as all their logging takes place outside the District of Sechelt.

WHY DO WE NEED TO SECURE THIS PARK EXPANSION AREA?

+ There is nothing like it left
  The only sizeable parks on the lower Sunshine Coast are primarily mountaintop parks totaling 9,980 hectares, a different ecosystem with limited year round accessibility. The modest Smugglers Cove Prov. Park at 1.85 hectares, is our largest low elevation park. It’s insufficient for a growing community, for recreation, enjoyment and for protecting biodiversity.

+ Avoid “Islands of Extinction”
  A survey by Wayne McCrory, RPBio, concluded that without connecting up the 3 small park parcels and the surrounding native forest, they will become “islands of extinction.” BC Parks acknowledges that the parcels are small and “could be impacted by adjacent development or forestry activities.”

+ Best concentration of low elevation mature native forest
  The Sunshine Coast’s old-growth ecosystems are as good as gone at low and mid-elevations. Now we are losing the remaining mature native forests, the old growth ecosystems of our future, to clearcuts and barren tree plantations. The Elphinstone Park proposal area has the best concentration left here of mature native forest not on a mountain top.

+ Prevent permanent biodiversity loss
  The blocks the Community Forest wants to log (EW19, EW18A and B), are in the highly depleted and fragmented Coastal Western Hemlock dry maritime ecosystem with only 2.3% old-growth left in the Chapman Landscape Unit. The province’s Old-growth Review Panel recommends that ecosystems with less than 10% old forest remaining in a Landscape Unit be deferred, not logged, as they are at “very high and near term risk of permanent biodiversity loss.”

+ More carbon and habitat, less fires and floods
  If our communities and forests are to be resilient in the face of a growing climate and biodiversity crisis, we need to protect these last remaining low elevation natural forests. They are less fire prone, wetter, cooler and store more carbon than tree plantations, and are repositories for crucial pollinators, plants and animals that may not survive otherwise.

+ The Decade of Ecosystem Restoration
  The UN has declared this the Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, it’s never been more urgent. Let’s start here, with our own Elphinstone forests.

HOW DO WE STOP THIS?

+ Email your views and concerns to Sechelt’s Mayor and Council at council@sechelt.ca, and copy the Community Forest Operations Manager at warren@sccf.ca. You can find a sample letter to use or personalize at loggingfocus.org, or write your own.

+ Give feedback to the Community Forest on their 5 year logging plan using their online form at: www.sccf.ca/operating-plan up until June 15.

Join ELF, receive updates and donate online at loggingfocus.org, or mail donations to ELF, PO Box 85 Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W0

The park proposal area is within the traditional territories of the Shíshálh (Sechelt) and Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) Nations and subject to aboriginal rights and title.