

Paradise Lost?

The Malaspina Peninsula Needs Your Help to Preserve Some of its Best-Loved Recreational Features

THE MALASPINA Peninsula north of Powell River is a natural treasure house. The region's incredible forested landscapes provide many benefits for residents. Some are economic and include jobs in tourism and forestry. Others are biological and ecological: water and air filtration, for instance, and wildlife habitat. Another group of benefits, including recreation and First Nations history, are primarily cultural and spiritual. All are important.

Forestry companies have chart areas covering most of the peninsula's public lands. Recent forest development plans unveiled by Canadian Forest Products Ltd and Northwest Hardwoods (a Weyerhaeuser subsidiary) reveal that many prime Malaspina recreational sites will be seriously affected by proposed and approved logging cutblocks.

Dinner Rock Park, for instance, a forest service recreation site where visitors can camp and picnic looking out over the Strait of Georgia, Savary Island and historic Dinner Rock, is one such place. The wheelchair-accessible Greenways Corridor, a network of heritage trails that winds through a rare coastal Douglas fir forest, is another. A third affected site is the Atrevida Loop Trail, a destination that supports local low-impact ecotourism businesses.

When the residents of the Malaspina Peninsula realized the scale of timber harvesting planned for the region, they joined together to offer feedback to government and

industry. Some cutblocks have been temporarily removed from the plans as a result. Much Crown land on the peninsula is protected until January, 2003, as part of an Agreement in

economic activity without degrading the natural systems that keep us all healthy. The clearcut logging with reserves that is planned for the area is not compatible with

this goal. Residents want to work with the forest industry to ensure that adequate buffer zones will be provided for recreation sites and that harvesting methods will protect veteran trees, rare ecological features, viewsapes and habitat for wildlife species at risk.

A legal, binding stewardship plan is needed for the Malaspina Peninsula—and for the entire Sunshine Coast. Resource management must benefit local communities, create local jobs and be sustainable. It must allow for and consider public comment. It must respect endangered ecosystems.

And it must preserve the extraordinary recreation potential we have here, which represents our economic future. With suitable development, the peninsula can become an important destination for nature and adventure tourism, as well as

being a gateway to Desolation Sound and the Discovery Islands.

A stable forest with old-growth and near-old-growth zones, stands of maturing second-growth and a highly developed outdoor recreation system will be a more valuable asset

for our community than a forest managed to produce pulp and cheap lumber. Rotation cycles and methods of harvesting must be changed so that woods of various ages are available to different users. The annual allowable cut must be reduced.

The people of BC, including the Sliammon First Nation, are the stewards of this land. Not the forest company executives. Not the senior civil servants and the politicians. If we don't act to preserve our natural resources, we can lose them forever. By working together and sending a clear message to industry and government, we can create a practical, ecosystem-based vision for the Malaspina Peninsula. We can ensure a fair, just resolution of land claims and a healthy, intact peninsula for our children.



Shootingstars (Dodecatheon pulchellum), one of our most spectacular wildflowers, enrich open woods in spring Paul Clements photo

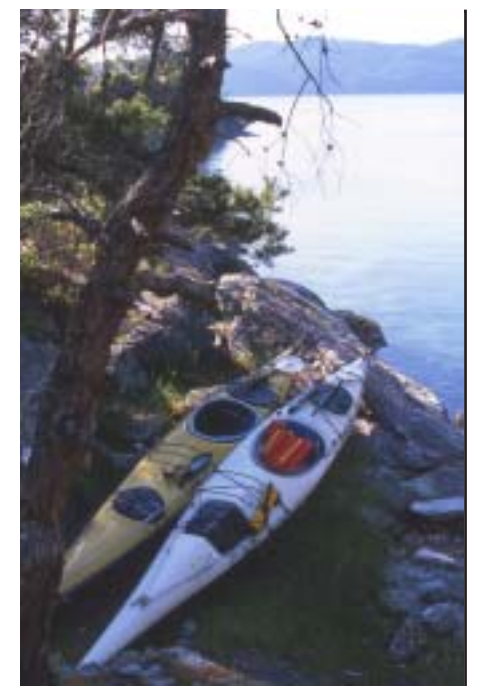
Principle between the provincial government and the Sliammon First Nation. For the long term, however, the peninsula's natural resources and features are at significant risk. No high-level plan exists to guide future use. Our forests can still be



Greenways and public trail systems are an important shared community resource. Eagle Walz photo

clearcut. Our recreation sites can still be eliminated. A fair solution to land-use conflicts in the area remains to be found.

The challenge of sustainable development on the peninsula is the same as it is everywhere: to plan



Desolation Sound draws visitors from near and far. A Scott photo

What's Inside?

Dinner Rock Park	2
Youth Perspectives	2
Jobs from Ecotourism	3
Greenways Corridors	4
What Can You Do?	4
Sunshine Coast Trail	5
Savary Island	6
Value-added Products	6
Natural History	7
Peninsula Map	8

Save Dinner Rock Park

THE DINNER ROCK Forest Recreation Site, commonly known as Dinner Rock Park, is the Malaspina Peninsula's favourite public space. This is where local residents come to picnic and to

helicoptered into place and a plaque unveiled at the Forest Service campsite. The original cross is in the Powell River Museum.

The Dinner Rock area is included in the lands covered by an



Dinner Rock Park is a favourite camping and picnicking spot for local residents. The rock itself is in the background. Andrew Scott photo

camp. Of course, visitors from off the peninsula come here, too, and are soothed and inspired by the west-facing waterfront location with its great sunsets and spectacular views over Savary Island. Of all the 15 or so forest recreation sites that remain in the Powell River area, Dinner Rock Park is the jewel in the crown.

Dinner Rock itself is a tiny islet immediately south of the campsite. You can just make out a white cross on top, which commemorates the marine tragedy that occurred at the rock on the dark, rainy night of October 11, 1947. The small coastal steamer *MV Gulf Stream* was heading to Lund that night with 41 passengers and crew members when it ploughed into Dinner Rock at 15 knots and turned on its side. Five people died, including three children.

The following year Henry Pavid, whose 18-month-old daughter Jean lost her life in the accident, erected a cross on Dinner Rock. Fifty years later, in 1998, a memorial service was held for the victims, the current cross was

Agreement in Principle between the Sliammon First Nation and the BC government and is protected by a provincial order-in-council until January, 2003. After that, who



Five lives were lost in the tragic wreck of the MV Gulf Stream on Dinner Rock on October 11, 1947. Photo courtesy Powell River Museum

knows what will happen? Although some of the forest adjacent to Dinner Rock in Canfor's and Weyerhaeuser's current forest development plans no longer has Category A status, and thus cannot immediately be cut, there is nothing to prevent the companies—or the Sliammon First Nation—from

cutting the area at some future date.

The forest around Dinner Rock is part of the increasingly rare Coastal Douglas Fir biogeoclimatic zone, an ecosystem that is disappearing in BC because it mainly occurs in sunny, southwest-facing waterfront locations that are greatly valued by members of our species for their development potential. The CDF classification is seriously under-represented in BC's parks and protected areas.

The scenic, wheelchair-accessible Browne Creek Trail, built with public funds, winds through the forest and offers an excellent opportunity to explore this type of ecosystem. The trail area, though, is also scheduled to be clearcut (see pages 4 and 5 for more on trails).

We are in desperate need of a plan to preserve the Dinner Rock forest recreation site and its surroundings (including the Browne Creek Trail). The Ministry of Forests did ask the Powell River Regional District if it would assume responsibility for Dinner Rock and other recreation sites, but district directors voted unanimously against the proposal, claiming that no funds were available for maintenance and that the province was responsible.

Viewpoints from Youth

Last summer I worked as part of a group called Youth Encouraging Sustainability (YES) to try to bring a Land and Resource Management Plan to Powell River. The LRMP is a public participation model that gives many more people a say in what is done with our resources and our environment. The Powell River-Sunshine Coast region is one of the last areas in BC not to have such a plan. However, we direly need it or something like it.

Currently we have little say in what is done. Logging is still the use given precedence by decision makers. As a result, the region stands to lose a lot. Trails, recreational areas and natural beauty are being destroyed. Even worse, people are losing their power to influence these changes. Without a framework of public participation, the provincial government is now making decisions almost unilaterally.

Last summer, when I contacted Stan Hagen, the Minister of Sustainable Resource Management, and the MLA for Powell River, Harold Long, I received vague promises that people would be given more say in upcoming resource decisions. Nothing has happened, however. Why? Because people are not making themselves heard. The government needs to hear regularly from disconcerted voters rather than just one young YES member. They need to hear people demanding change and suggesting alternate solutions. If large numbers of people don't make a fuss, the politicians will not make an effort to implement change. So let's make some noise!

—Tejas Ewing

As Saltery Bay disappears from view I sit alone at the back of the ferry. Powell River was my home for over 20 years. I was born here; I grew up climbing trees and swimming in the ocean. Unfortunately for me and other young people like me, these days I can only afford to visit.

Powell River is decreasing in population; jobs are scarce, jobs for youth even scarcer. This visit I learned that Dinner Rock Park and other parts of the Malaspina Peninsula are slated for logging and more businesses are shutting down.

3

Maybe people are losing heart. But Powell River still has a wealth of resources worth protecting. It's going to take creativity, though, to diversify our use of natural resources and revive the town.

If Powell River can create jobs for youth and the broader community by utilizing the natural resource base this will ensure a healthy community for generations to come. I know this is easier said

youth and the broader community. Go to public advisory meetings with Weyerhaeuser and help them plan sustainable forestry.

Anyone who has been to the Powell River area knows that it is a wilderness paradise. This is our backyard. How are we going to protect it? —*Caila Holbrook*

Growing up in a rural community, my teenage years seemed



Better recreational facilities in the Powell River region can also result in more job opportunities for young people. Andrew Scott photo

than done, but here are some places to start: there are several UREP areas around the Powell River region. UREP stands for the use, recreation and enjoyment of the public. That's us. These areas may be reabsorbed and made available for timber harvesting if they are underutilized.

We need to show that these sites are important or they may be



A tasty treat: trailing blackberry (Rubus ursinus). A Scott photo

logged. You can look up UREPs at the Forestry Office or get an inventory of public places from the Eco-Care Conservancy. Give Stan Hagen and Harold Long a call and let them know that you want Powell River to diversify the economic opportunities of the land base for

burdensome and stifling to me, but I now see that it is those growing to adulthood in urban centres that carry the true burden. They are disconnected from the control centers of our planet: our forests.

But how can I expect those who feel they have never benefited from the forests to want to conserve them? The vividness of seeing a wild animal up close is an experience that must continue to be available to all those who do not yet understand what it is they will lose in the destruction of our forests. Will there be animals for my children to discover? Will television and photographs be my children's only connection to our forests? Decisions facing our forests should be made by those affected in the long term, not by those who will profit from their immediate destruction. The loss of forests is not just the loss of trees and plants and animal species. It is the loss of possibility.

I once read a Native American proverb that now seems relevant:

Only after the last river has been drained, only after the last tree has fallen, only after the last fish has been caught, only then, will you realize that money cannot be eaten. —*Maylene Jacob*

Jobs from Ecotourism

This year, despite a global tourism downturn, over 22 million overnight visitors are expected to explore BC, looking for a "Super, Natural" experience fast disappearing from much of the planet. They will make a \$9 billion contribution to BC's economy (compared to about \$7 billion from forestry) and account for well over 100,000 direct jobs.

One-tenth of these visitors are ecotourists: people wanting a non-motorized, educational outdoors experience in a pristine natural environment with plenty of chances to see wildlife. When it comes to offering this kind of adventure, BC is rated one of the best destinations in the world. As long as we don't degrade our amazing wilderness, we have a huge competitive advantage over other areas in tapping the \$750 billion annual global ecotourism market—a market that is likely to grow in the future.

BC residents also value outdoor recreation highly. Over 2.5 million (about 65 percent) of us engage in nature-related activities such as hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, fishing and kayaking. And we spend \$2 billion a year in pursuit of these pastimes.

Many Malaspina Peninsula residents have invested time, energy



Paddling perfection on the North Sunshine Coast. A Scott photo

and money into developing local tourism businesses—the kinds of businesses that the Powell River region desperately needs if it is to continue diversifying and

expanding its economy. Hotel, restaurant and bed and breakfast operators, for instance, are as reliant on parks, forested trails, intact viewscapes, clean waters, old-growth trees and wildlife-viewing areas as ecotourist outfitters, because these are the values that bring the visitors in the first place.



Ready to provide sherpa service. Photo courtesy Hiker's Haven

Travellers from around the world come to the Malaspina Peninsula. "My business is global," explains Lori Kemp, proprietor of Hiker's Haven, a charming peninsula guesthouse. "I've had visitors from Maine, Ireland, England, the Netherlands, Germany, the USA and from the rest of Canada."

Lori has established a creative niche market (the first in the region) by offering "goatpacking" services as well as accommodation. Goatpacking is enjoyable for anyone, but it makes hiking especially easy for people with limited mobility: They only need carry a camera with them into the forest; the goats do all the rest of the work. Lori has invested in property and business assets—and also in training (interpretive guiding, business plan development, sign language studies). Her livelihood is staked to access to trails, old-growth forest and wildlife-viewing habitats.

All this is now in jeopardy. The proposed logging of Atrevida Loop Trail not only threatens her livelihood, but also her water supply. The logging will destroy the trail infrastructure and the area's visual appeal. "Visitors do not come to hike into clearcuts," declares Lori, who is alarmed at the recent evaporation of all public processes surrounding land-use planning in the region. "Long-term sustainability can only happen," she says, "when rural people have a variety of economic opportunities open to them."

Greenways Corridors

GREENWAYS corridors—usually trails or paths with a surrounding buffer of mature vegetation—have been described as “long, skinny parks.” They have many benefits. Besides providing human recreation opportunities, they also act as pathways for wild creatures, linking isolated but essential areas of habitat. Greenways are alternative transportation systems. They can be

of the peninsula.

Despite assisting with some of the construction, the Ministry of Forests has steadfastly resisted showing these greenways on its timber inventory maps. Ministry officials refuse to acknowledge them as a community resource or ensure that they are protected in forest development plans. The Wilde Creek Heritage Trail has



Greenways serve as alternative transportation and wildlife corridors, and can be designed for wheelchair access *Andrew Scott photo*

designed for pedestrians, wheelchairs, bicycles and horseback riders. They can link parks, heritage sites, ancient trees and other unique ecological features. They are an effective way to help attract tourists to a region.

A series of demonstration greenways was built on the Malaspina Peninsula. These routes, constructed by local volunteers with public funds and forest industry support, run along the west side of the peninsula, through a rare and beautiful Coastal Douglas Fir (CDF) ecosystem. They are wheelchair-accessible, built to a seven-percent grade or less. Some follow old logging skid roads and highlight important aspects of our forestry heritage. Other trails, like the Atriveda Loop, connect the greenways system to the Sunshine Coast Trail on the east side

already been logged, poorly, and left without an adequate buffer of trees. Now the wonderful Browne Creek Trail, part of which skirts Dinner Rock Park, is slated for clearcutting. This trail forms a major loop west of Highway 101 through the endangered CDF ecozone, with a side route to Hurtado Point. At its north end it reaches almost to Lund. At its south end it connects with Jay's Trail, which, in turn, links up to the Sunshine Coast Trail.



The Browne Creek Trail near Dinner Rock. *A Scott photo*

If you believe that our greenways are an important local resource, you can help to preserve them by letting government officials—elected representatives, regional district directors, forest bureaucrats—know that you want them saved and adequately buffered. Otherwise there's a good chance that we could lose these amenities.

Get informed about land-use and forestry issues. Advocate for an ecosystem-based forest management system on the Malaspina Peninsula. Go to open houses and public meetings. Write letters to the newspaper. Exercise your democratic right to

You Can Help

participate in public decision-making processes.

Write, fax or email Premier Gordon Campbell, the ministers of Forests, Sustainable Resource Management, and Water, Land and Air Protection, and our MLA, Harold Long. Ask them to protect the Greenways Corridor and Atriveda Loop and designate Dinner Rock as a provincial park. Ask them to initiate a fair land and resource management plan for the region that is legally binding, takes into consideration all users and resource values, and incorporates public comment. Ask them why Northwest Hardwoods, a wholly-owned subsidiary of US forestry giant Weyerhaeuser, is allowed to harvest BC wood under a government program designed to assist small businesses.

Write, fax or email your regional and municipal government representatives. Press them to harmonize the interests of different resource-user groups and give re-

Ask them to either drop cutblocks adjacent to community trails and recreation sites or provide at least a 50-metre buffer zone for the trails. Remind them that international recognition and certification for their products requires community involvement. Ask the Ministry of Forests to improve visual-quality objectives for the region and help establish community forestry.

Work for and contribute to local conservation groups. Support our First Nations.

VOTE! There are municipal elections coming up in November, 2002. Support regional and municipal district candidates who are environmentally aware and who will work for responsible, sustainable development.

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The delicate, mottled flowers of the chocolate lily (Fritillaria lanceolata) are another spring delight on the peninsula. *Andrew Scott photo*

gional planning a stronger role. Ask them to acquire the forestry recreation sites that government wishes to abandon and to be more supportive of sustainable development and ecotourism.

Write, fax or email representatives from Canfor and Weyerhaeuser.

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The Sunshine Coast Trail Story

By R. E. Walz, Director, Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society

THE SUNSHINE Coast Trail (SCT) was conceived in 1992 when a handful of outdoor enthusiasts realized that there was a vanishing amount of accessible old growth left on the Upper Sunshine Coast. They formed the Powell River Parks and

180-kilometre-long trail hugs the Mediterranean-like shoreline and traverses old-growth forests in the Gwendoline Hills. From there it frequently follows the riparian zones of creeks, lakes and the ocean. The next substantial stand of old



Hikers pause to enjoy magical Appleton Creek.

Eagle Walz photo

Wilderness Society (PRPAWS), a registered charitable non-profit society, to set aside some protected areas that would be linked where possible by corridors.

PRPAWS felt that the best way to have this concept gain acceptance would be to involve the public as well as government and industry. The society began to build trails and hold grand openings. These trails often extended or connected existing shorter trails. Quickly, through usage and publicity, the new trails became popular with the public, as they allowed entry to areas that until then were accessed only by bushwhackers or loggers.

PRPAWS has successfully lobbied for the creation of three provincial parks (Malaspina, Inland and Duck Lake), which protect some 30 kilometres of the Sunshine Coast Trail, as well as a number of other hiking trails. Interpretive signage is being planned for the many points of interest all along the trail. Currently nearly 200 wooden directional signs help hikers find their way, as do the ubiquitous orange metal markers.

The Sunshine Coast Trail connects four significant areas of old growth. From the start at Sarah Point, the gateway to Desolation Sound Provincial Marine Park, the

growth is encountered near Confederation Lake where a log cabin has been constructed for public use. The trail meanders through ancient forests along the crest of the Smith Range.



On Kayach Bluffs overlooking Sliammon Lake.

Eagle Walz photo

Frequently the forest opens up and affords breathtaking views. Past the shores of Lois Lake the path climbs through magnificent stands of Douglas-fir and yellow cedar on Mount Troubridge and down to the Saltery Bay ferry terminal. The trail has over 20 access points and provides hiking opportunities from novice to expert.

Many small camp sites have been built along the trail, but a handful remain rudimentary and will be upgraded in the next few years. The BOMB Squad, a group of retired gents, did much trail work and built some marvellous wooden bridges. PRPAWS also coordinated with Greenways, which has constructed hiking and biking paths that provide access into Lund. Additional support for the trail has come from federal, provincial, regional, First Nations and municipal agencies, as well as from many organizations and a multitude of hard-working volunteers.

Visitors interested in hiking the Sunshine Coast Trail, or a portion of it, can explore the trail online at www.sunshinecoast-trail.com or contact the Powell River Visitors InfoCentre at 604-485-4701.

Forest Recreation Facts

- BC's forest recreation sites attract about 5 million visits a year, a total that has been growing steadily.
- The cost of maintaining the forest recreation program is about \$1.5 million, less than one percent of the Ministry of Forests' budget.
- South of the border, the US Forest Service administers a geographic area smaller than BC that receives 900 million visits per year, employs 22,500 people in tourism and recreation management and contributes an estimated \$130 billion to the federal economy. Tourism revenues in the western US states on national forest lands are 10 times higher than timber revenues.
- The BC Forest Service employs 5,000 people, less than one percent of whom are employed in tourism and recreation. The 45 people currently working in recreation management in BC are scheduled to dwindle to less than ten in 2003.
- Maintenance contracts and site management for forest recreation sites can be an important source of local employment.
- Many recreation sites in rural BC were developed in partnership with community groups and volunteers who invested time and money—and thus do not deserve to be discarded without substantial public input.

Saving Savary Island

By Liz Webster

UNLIKE OTHER islands in the Strait of Georgia, crescent-shaped Savary is oriented east-west. It is a narrow remnant of glacial sediments “anchored” by bedrock at the eastern tip, a 450-hectare forested sandbar stretching eight kilometres across the strait and migrating in a northwesterly direction.

A get-rich-quick subdivision scheme back in 1910 saw the island subdivided into city-sized lots; today Savary has over 1700 legal parcels and the highest density of any island in the

Strait of Georgia. In 1995, when US-based Trillium Corporation applied to subdivide the last intact portion of Savary (District Lot 1375), less than two percent of the island was protected.

In 1997 the Savary Island Land

Trust (SILT) was founded to preserve the island’s natural areas for the future. Biologist Kathy Dunster documented DL 1375 in March, 2000, and found that it represented the best example of a



Beacon Point, where some of Savary’s most sensitive dune ecosystems are located.
Liz Webster photo

dune ecosystem in Canada, home to a previously undocumented plant community and many uncommon species. Her research confirmed the best use for the land: preservation as an ecological reserve.

Powell River Region District

(PRRD) directors ignored the available research—and overwhelming public support for preserving DL 1375—and did whatever they could to facilitate the Trillium plan. Because of Savary’s urban-style subdivision, the number of taxable parcels is high. (Savary pays for 65 percent of the services in Area A.) Savary’s population is largely seasonal. As a result, the majority of property owners do not vote in PRRD elections. For most islanders, taxation without representation is the unfortunate norm.

With no zoning in place, the developers applied for subdivision of the land under the Local Services Act, which would allow for 33 10-acre parcels. In June, 2001, the Ministry of Transportation approved the application subject to 20 stringent conditions designed to address environmental, archaeological, geotechnical and health issues. Perhaps the conditions were too arduous for the developers.

On April 3, 2002, after much lobbying, the Nature Trust of BC,

the province and Environment Canada announced the acquisition of a 50-percent interest in DL 1375 and adjoining lots 35 and 36. The acquisition also includes five hectares of waterfront property donated by two individuals who wish to remain anonymous. As well, a 6.5-hectare parcel was acquired for a total of 150 hectares. One-third of the island was saved. Our dreams had come true.

An Official Community Plan has been underway since 1997. Although we now know a great deal about Savary’s environmental fragility, the regional district has done very little to protect the island, choosing to remove all regulatory language from the OCP and dismissing the need for protected Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

Despite many people’s efforts and mountains of information, our local government did just about everything in its power to prevent the protection of this nationally unique ecosystem. In a democracy it should not have to be so hard to do the right thing. We deserve better leadership. We need local elected officials who are educated, open and able to see beyond their brief tenures. It’s time for a change.

Please vote in November.

Adding Value to Our Forest Products

TO DEVELOP a sustainable economy in the Powell River area, we should harvest our forests selectively. We could call it “living off our interest.” Economists call it *maintaining our natural capital*. We also need to depend more on our value-added industries. Instead of a few jobs from clearcutting, then shipping raw logs out of our region, we can get hundreds of local jobs from less wood by making furniture, musical instruments, specialty flooring and other wood products.

As it stands now, less than one worker is employed in BC per thousand cubic metres of wood harvested (compared to two in Sweden and 2.6 in the US). We add only \$119 in value per cubic metre compared to \$318 in the US. BC’s share of Canadian value-added wood exports is sinking.

The value of our wood is roughly proportional to its age.

Except for red alder, most young wood, harvested on a 40-year rotation, is good only for pulp. Serviceable lumber can be produced from 70 to 80-year-old trees. But furniture makers need straight grains, which come from larger trees that are anywhere from 120 to 240 years old. A mature forest with many different ages of trees produces larger volumes of higher-quality, more valuable wood, improves wildlife habitat, creates a wider variety of jobs and is more biologically diverse.

The clearcutting and overcutting of our forests is as much a social and economic issue as it is an environmental one. The people of the region are not allowed access to use the forests and wood sustainably for their current benefit—and for the future benefit of their children. By far the greatest economic benefits from cutting in the Sunshine Coast

Forest District go to multinational company shareholders, with stumpage payments to the provincial government.

Yes, we’ve heard all this before. But how can we foster intelligent forest management and economic diversification on the Malaspina Peninsula?

- We need a stewardship plan for peninsula’s forests, one that would help us develop a community forest.
- We should encourage Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification for forest companies. This system guarantees ecosystem-based harvesting, as well as community and First Nations involvement and approval for forest development plans.
- A percentage of all harvesting should be automatically allocated for local value-added use. This is partly dependent on provincial government policy, but forestry companies can also voluntarily agree to do this.
- The people who live in the region need to tell government and industry clearly what they want, or nothing will ever change.

Wild Crafts

I feel so lucky to live in one of the world’s last remaining great forests, where I’m able to wildcraft herbs for medicines. There is an escalating market for these medicines and the herb supply is limited. I’ve witnessed patch after patch disappear over the last two decades.

Clean air and water are our first medicines, and timber overharvesting diminishes the quality of both. Locally, forest companies lease 65 percent of the land base, while community members are denied access to the forest resources of the remaining “commons.” Weyerhaeuser’s shareholders profit and we can’t even cut firewood.

The massive efforts of the world’s concerned citizens have created some changes in forest practices, but we are still losing our forest cutblock by inevitable cutblock. I am supported by a profound faith in a sentient nature, however, and I hope that the next generation will find ways to restore the balance that has been lost. —Sally Keays

Nature in the Rainforest: Flora & Fauna

By Ann Clements

THE NATURAL history of the Malaspina Peninsula has been formed by water. Ocean surrounds us. Winter winds bring rains to nurture the temperate rainforest ecosystem. These same rain clouds blanket the peninsula in winter, holding in the earth's warmth. Malaspina sees little snow.

Two biogeoclimatic zones are found here. The Coastal Douglas Fir (CDF) zone covers a narrow coastal strip and the Coastal Western Hemlock (CWH) zone, the balance of the peninsula. The CDF zone is very limited in range and is one of BC's most endangered ecosystems. Both zones have high winter rainfall and mild summers. They differ in altitude, and in the plant communities they contain, though species overlap. The rainforests are second growth Douglas-fir, western hemlock and associated deciduous trees and shrubs. At the driest end, a signature community of arbutus, shore pine and juniper is found. Cedar is the signature of the wettest areas.

Within these communities, different families dominate each season. In winter, Malaspina is es-



Delicate pixie cup lichens (genus Cladonia) grow on rotting logs.

of ferns, from tiny spleenworts to tall swords. Several species of horsetail send up eye-catching, fertile spears. The orchids—delicate



Browsing Columbian black-tailed deer (Odocoileus hemionius columbianus) are a common sight in the forest understory.

calipso and coralstick—grow in the forest understory. Lilies—Columbia, meadow death camas and chocolate—are found in sunny meadows and on rock bluffs. Deciduous trees and shrubs set their first leaves and the Pacific dogwoods become a blaze of white bracts.

By summer the wildflowers are in full bloom and shrubs dominate the landscape with a series of delicious

pecially rich in species often hidden or overlooked in other seasons. Mosses thrive on the winter rains, and form red, gold and green carpets. Non-photosynthetic lichens add their paler hues. Even rocky bluffs have vibrant communities of bryophytes.

With spring, larger plants reappear in the understory. The rainforest is home to a diverse community

berries. Salmonberry is followed by thimbleberry, huckleberry, Saskatoon, Oregon grape, salal and finally a riot of blackberry.

Mushrooms of every colour and shape dominate the fall rainforest. Golden chanterelles push through moss, and elusive pines attract mushroom hunters. As mosses define the winter forest, so the rich kingdom of fungi owns the fall.

The plant kingdom feeds us all. Many creatures thrive on Malaspina's rich plant life, and some are in turn food for others. Bear and deer are common on the peninsula. Raccoon, beaver, ground squirrels and mice live throughout. Brown bats feed on insects at dusk. Eagles cruise the sea and salmon streams. Barred owls ask "who cooks for you?" from the dark for-

are home to sea stars, shellfish, and scuttling crabs. Tidepools house anemones and sculpins. Kelps wash up on beaches. Boaters find seals and sea lions on rocky islets, and whales and dolphins travel the straits. Beneath the waves are salmon, rockfish, ling cod. In winter, rafts of sea fowl delight Malaspina's birders.

To find out more about the natural history of the Malaspina Peninsula, visit the Malaspina Naturalist Club's website at www.armourtech.com/~malanat or consult the publications *Powell River and District Nature Sites* or *Powell River and District Bird List*, available at the Visitors Bureau.

Helpful Sources

Here are some useful websites. Sierra Club BC (www.bc.sierraclub.ca) publishes a fine series of pamphlets on sustainable forestry in BC. For more information on certification,

try the Forest Stewardship Council website (www.fscoax.org). The websites of the Sunshine Coast Conservation Association (www.thesc.ca), the Western Canada Wilderness Committee (www.wildernesscommittee.org) and the David Suzuki Foundation (www.davidsuzuki.org) also contain much excellent material.

Credits and Thank You's

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Sea stars at Okeover Inlet.

Paul Clements photo

forest is a hospitable habitat attracting abundant wildlife.

The ocean not only nurtures the rainforest, it is itself a rich ecosystem. Invertebrate marine life can easily be seen at low tides. Rocks

Sunshine Coast Trails & Points of Interest

NORTH OF POWELL RIVER, B.C.

LEGENDS

This Area is Identified as a
RARE COASTAL DOUGLAS FIR ECO-SYSTEM
OLD GROWTH MANAGEMENT ZONES

H - Heritage Sites
• White Creek
• LUND TRAIL

P - Parks
• STANLEY PARK
• STONER ROCK

V - OLD GROWTH
• VETS + THE
• YOUNG OLD
• ATRÉVIDA LOOP
• TRAIL

TC - TRILLIUM CONSERVANCY ON SAUVY ISLAND

MAMU - HARLELD MUDDELT HABITAT

EELGRASS BEDS
Malaspina Peninsula
Boulder

Sunshine Coast Trail
Greenways Corridor Trail
Highway 101
Unpaved Roads
Trails
Campsites
Shellfish Farming

UREPS
Areas for Use and Recreational Enjoyment of the Public
• Between Old Mine Rd + Dinner Road
• Dinner Rock Park
• Hurtado Point
• Thulin Passage
• Top of Malaspina Inlet
• Wednesday Lake
• Okeover campsite
• OKEOVER/TOUENATCH ON SLIAMMON LANDS
• OPPOSITE OKEOVER GOV'T DOCK



Not to Scale
Rivers & Trails