

Cathedral Grove Treesit Chronicle

Contributed by Ingmar Lee
Wednesday, 01 November 2006
Last Updated Thursday, 16 November 2006

Dear Ancient Forest Lovers,

Here's a chronicle account from the front-line at Cathedral Grove, British Columbia, where direct-action non-violent civil-disobedient activists have been holding off the Neocon Gordon Campbell government from constructing a giant pay-parking lot in one of the final remaining tracts of ancient primeval fir forest on Vancouver Island.

To date, this treesitting protest has continued for two years and is the 2nd longest-standing continuously occupied blockade in British Columbia history, only surpassed by our friends at Sutikalh. In the latest developments, the Campbell government has expressed its renewed interest to construct the roundly condemned parking lot. After staging a series of bogus PR meetings about its plans, the government has faced a critical mass of local opposition, and being unable to resolve the issue, the "Environment" Minister, Barry Penner, has threatened to simply shut down this popular park, which receives more than 1,000,000 tourist visits every year. This account is a compilation of updates which I have posted to indymedia victoria (www.victoriaindymedia.org) over the past two years.

For more information, please visit our spectacular website at www.cathedralgrove.se

Cheers, Ingmar

Procyon Lotor Basecamp, Cathedral Grove, Vancouver Island

(Mug-shot banner of BC's drunken Neocon Premier Gordon Campbell, busted on Maui, while on the job, for driving while shitfaced.)

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Stand-off at Cathedral Grove: Announcement

by Ingmar Lee • Thursday May 13, 2004 at 11:16 AM

Announcing the Direct-Action, Non-Violent, Civil-Disobedience DEFENSE of Cathedral Grove.

Dear Forest Lovers,

The Gordon Campbell government has been seeking to get an injunction to remove protesters who have been blocking felling crews from cutting down the forest to clear a giant parking lot at Cathedral Grove. The judge has said that she would decide in 'weeks, not months' as to whether the injunction would be issued. That was 6 weeks ago, and still no decision. People are tired of waiting around for Campbells sleazy and forceful tack of using injunctions to avoid meaningful public discussion on logging controversy around the province, and this serious and ongoing issue keeps raising its ugly head. Two years ago we fought and won this same tired, old parking lot scheme. The fight to protect the grove has been ongoing for decades. (NB We always refer to the park as 'Cathedral Grove' and do not recognize the name of BC's most voracious destroyer of forest after which the park has been hypocritically re-named)

Given the unprecedented and barbaric assault on the BC wilderness by the Campbell regime, we have decided that as citizens of BC, it is our duty to protect the Cathedral Grove forest, which at 156 hectares is the pitiful largest remaining contiguous primeval refugia tuft of Vancouver Islands once magnificent Douglas fir forest. We cannot trust a government whose first attack on BC wilderness was to open up the trophy-killing of Grizzly bears, which bait-kills Golden eagles, allows logging in Marbelled murrelet and Spotted owl and Vancouver Island marmot habitat, which promotes massive feed-lot fish-farming, allows clearcutting of primeval forests, myriad other crimes against nature, and is working to hand over control of millions and millions of hectares of public forestland to the exclusive control of giant logging corporations. American-based Weyerhaeuser, the worlds largest logging company's deperadations on the windward side of the grove have already caused severe damage by opening up large corridors to funnel the powerful Qualicum winds, and the windthrow swath continues systematically 'walking' its way across the park. Cathedral Grove has been the most news-generating forest issue in the province over the past 6 months and is very symbolic of the Campbell corporate menace which was installed with financial backing of BC's largest logging companies. Weyerhaeuser, which was Campbell's third-most generous financier, is deeply implicated in the destruction of the grove.

Over the past several months, people have been quietly laying out an infrastructure to defend the forest. We are ready, and we are prepared to fight hard to save the forest, and are willing to risk arrest in doing so. We will fight the Campbell wilderness-wreckers using direct-action, non-violent civil-disobedience tactics, and it will be a great challenge for them to extract us from the forest and arrest us. A core of very determined and conscientious forest defenders have thus-far heroically staved off the destruction of the forest, and many of them have incurred considerable personal expense in doing so.

I invite all of you to come out to the 'Procyon Lotor' Base Camp and help to support our defence of the forest. Regular tree-climbing, platform-building and banner-making workshops will be conducted. This is a very lean, efficient, unorganized, grass-roots effort, and people are working together across a wide variety of skill-sets to see this forest protected. We embrace the widest diversity of effort to accomplish our goal of protecting this forest, once and for all. People have been incurring significant personal expense and donations are most gratefully accepted. We need your help and support at the 'cutting-edge,' front-lines of Cathedral Grove. Please don't shuffle

this issue off, and do what you can to help!

Cheers, Ingmar

@ the Procyon Lotor Base Camp,

Cathedral Grove

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News from the Cutting Edge: Cathedral Grove

by Ingmar Lee Wednesday May 19, 2004 at 10:45 PM

Cathedral Grove

Battling the Gordon Campbell "PAY-PARK SCAM" 100's of 'Culturally Modified Trees' (CMT's) discovered on Weyerhaeuser 'private land' across from the proposed parking lot. This magnificent living Heritage Forest must be protected!

Hello All,

Now that it's past injunction-serving hours, I'm able to spend a few hours away from the 'Procyon Lotor' base camp at Cathedral Grove to get behind a computer to send this update.

During the past week the crew has been focussing on reinforcing our defence infrastructure to protect the Cathedral Grove forest. We've been stocking all the tree-sitting platforms with food and water, and have been refining our action protocols for the day when the Gordon Campbell onslaught to build the parking-lot will begin. One of our platforms is at 150 ft. and is, I believe, the tallest tree-sit in the world at the moment. We have been laying out a system of traverse lines so that we can escape the platforms, once we are challenged.

We have been working to raise all the banners to a sufficient height so that they can only be removed with an expensive cherry-picker, as more than 100 "PAY-PARK SCAM" etc. banners have been torn down to date. Today we hoisted a colourful 122X202 Gordo Mugshot banner which reads: "BC's IDIOT PREMIER, CONVICTED CRIMINAL," in two-ft. lettering, with "WEYERHAEUSER LACKEY" written down the sides. The banner can be clearly seen by vehicles from a 1/2 km away and the Grove resounds with the sounds of honking horns. Further in, we have hoisted a huge banner which reads: "WIPE WEYERHAEUSER OFF THE WORLD!" and lists their crimes against nature on the island. Photo's will soon be posted on the website.

I have found at least 15 CMT's in the area slated for cutting, and directly across the highway from the proposed parking-lot entrance, there is the most amazing CMT forest I have ever seen. There are literally hundreds of bark-peeled CMT's, some of which have

strip-catfaced more than 100 ft long, and every one has been peeled on the uphill side of the tree. There are also a number of larger cedars which were in the process of burn-felling and are still standing with the burn-cavities clearly visible. It appears that there was a massive fire in the Cameron Valley in 1885, and the peeled cedars have come up under the canopy of the fir forest which survived the fire. Most of the trees have been peeled in the past 100 years, including some which have been peeled very recently, but there are also many which have had the callouses roll right over the catfaces and have sealed the wounds. The forest is predominantly of enormous fir trees. These are among the most massive, extremely tall fir trees that I have ever seen, and the entire living Heritage Forest happens to be part of Weyerhaeuser's private lands. There is so much to be learned about the superb historic First Nation foresters who managed this ancient 'working forest' so well. These CMT's are precious archaeological artifacts, and the BC Heritage Branch has long been negligent in protecting CMT's from logging. The forest is slated for logging by the world's largest logging company, and Weyerhaeuser Timber Cruisers have been traversing and marking it out for destruction. Yesterday, Richard Boyce and I filmed the CMT's for a presentation in Qualicum Beach tomorrow night. I will be constructing a trail through the CMT forest, and once 100 people pass down the trail, it becomes a BC Wilderness institution!

The injunction could come down any day now and without the camp and the very, small group of our very generous and devoted supporters, the pay-park scam will go ahead and the trees will be cut down immediately. As usual, as ever, it is extremely lonely out at the 'Cutting Edge' with virtually no support or even interest from professional environmental groups. Nevertheless, for those of you who do care about this precious forest, and this very important, symbolic fight, one that has already been fought and won many times, please do something to help. This is not a situation where writing another letter or negotiating with your favourite logging company will help. It's a great place to camp, and there's the beautiful Cameron River flowing nearby, and as yet, there are no Gordon Campbell parking metres charging you for your wilderness experience.

Cheers, Ingmar

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News from Cathedral Grove Action

by Ingmar Lee • Sunday May 30, 2004 at 04:54 PM

Just a few thoughts from Cathedral Grove, now that the government has lost their attempt to remove protesters from Cathedral Grove by court injunction.

Ingmar Lee

May 30, 2004

Dear Landwatchers,

Campbell won't wish to create a big kafuffle over the park during tourist season, and will just hope that protesters will go away. I expect that they'll defer the project until fall, so our job is to continue to perterb the matter, and make such a nuisance of ourselves as possible that they just have to come in and arrest, under the Land Act, or whatever.

We are now working on installing platforms in a massive Douglas Fir which is prominently visible from the road. We have walkie-talkies which will allow media interviews

between the ground and the platforms. The platforms will be installed at around the 200 foot mark, making this the tallest tree-sit in the world. We are pre>paring to install banners right across the highway, and have a number of other annoyances planned.

We got huge mileage out> of the 122X152 Gordo mug-shot banner over the long weekend, with thousands of hits and honks as holidayers travelled out to the west coast, and back. Standing in the forest next to the banner (which we have to guard from irate Campbell fans and Weyerhaeuser lackeys), one can see the smiles and laughter as the vehicles pass by. The banner features the iconic mug-shot image, wih "BC's Idiot Premier" along the top, and "CONVICTED CRIMINAL" along the bottom. Down the sides it says "WEYERHAEUSER LACKEY."

I've been talking about the Grove with plenty of locals and it's very clear that people understand the relationship between Weyerhaeuser and the damage to the Grove. Weyerhaeuser is very much despised in these parts and this is a very important and vulnerable place to attack them.

This bizarre notion that we should 'refrain' from dragging Weyerhaeuser into the issue is just completely beyond belief. Weyerhaeuser is directly responsible for the windthrow damage that is occurring, and their further logging plans for the area include decimating a very important and spectacular CMT forest. We have now built a trail through the CMT's and anyone who takes a 20 minute hike will see hundreds of beautiful bark-stripped trees, as well as a number of trees which are in various stages of burn-felling.

Just today I took a busload of students from the University of Western Washington through the CMT forest. They were utterly awestruck to see the CMT's and horrified to learn of the worlds largest logging company's plans for this living heritage forest.

There is not a shred of evidence that mollycoddling and cooperating politely with Weyerhaeuser has ever had any benefit (other than personal) for the forests of Vancouver Island. Weyerhaeuser has been at its utmost ugliest at Cathedral Grove and is the parks' absolute major threat. Our goal is to bring this whole debacle to national attention and I aim to make sure that Weyerhaeuser is dragged right up to its front and central role as prime destroyer of the Grove.

In the run-up to the election, I personally believe that any politician who advocates immediate expropriation of these lands away from Weyerhaeuser, as well as the number of community watersheds owned

by them around the island will be very well received.

Once again, please consider Cathedral Grove and the Cameron Valley for a wonderful, free-of-charge camping holiday! Food, donations and your presence are most welcome. When considering your environmental donation options, please note that this effort is not being supported in any way by any BC environmental organization, and that your donation will go directly into action at the front lines.

Cheers, Ingmar

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Cathedral Grove: 'The Minaret, our latest tree-sit est. in Giant Fir

by Ingmar Lee • Saturday June 05, 2004 at 09:31 PM

We have now occupied a Giant Douglas fir tree, having installed 3 tree-sitting platforms!

Dear Big Tree Lovers,

The Racoons have been very busy at the Procyon Lotor Base Camp and we are ready to present our latest, most ambitious and outrageous tree-sit installation to the public!

We have now occupied a giant Douglas Fir right at Weyerhaeuser's gate where Gordo plans to provide access to the 150-slot parking-lot.

All of our other sits at the Grove have been installed in Cedars, so we decided to go for a Big Fir this time. We shot a fishline over the first branch at about 80 ft. using FAN's powerful 'Big-Shot' slingshot, after which we carefully pulled up a small-diameter cord, which then towed up our brand-new industrial-grade climbing rope. We then prussiked up the rope to install the media platform, from which we conduct interviews with media who aren't willing to make the ascent. It's quite the breath-taking climb, as there are no comforting branches at all, as there are on the routes to all the other platforms which help to dispell the feeling of vertigo.

From the media platform, I led the rope on up the tree, spur climbing another

50 feet to set the block and tackle to haul up 2 4X8 platforms to the 130ft. level. Normally I wouldn't consider spur-climbing such a magnificent tree, but even at this height, the bark was sufficiently thick to preclude the penetration of the spurs through to the cambium layer where the life-juices of the tree flow. I rigged the platform and Bill pushed the rope up to its full 200 ft length. We will be installing the 3rd platform at about 180 ft. Meanwhile, we are stocking all the platforms with food, water and equipment. We have been conducting daily tree-climbing workshops and forest defenders are arriving daily, eager to take to the trees. We continue to expand our network of traverse lines through the forest canopy.

We are being most generously supplied with food and equipment by our very devoted group of local supporters and everyone contributes according to their skillset. It is most wonderful and encouraging to have people pulling in every day with bags of groceries and other offerings. We have to guard the Gordo banner all day and nearly lost it, one Gordo-lover sneaked in and cut it down and had it loaded into his hatch-back when we caught him. (We thought of chucking his keys into the forest, but we let him go.) We have nearly completed the trail through the wonderful living heritage CMT forest, which is imminently threatened by Weyerhaeuser, and more than 50 people have hiked through already. (100 passages makes it a BC Wilderness Institution!)

WISH LIST:

- Lots and lots more rope and thick, strong wire (expired climbing rope, used rope any lengths or quality)
- More platforms
- More tree-lovers
- Free camping, naked swimming in the beautiful Cameron River

We are in continuous nuisance escalation mode.

We're getting about 10 "HONKS" for every "GET A FUKIN' JOB!!"

Cheers, Ingmar

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## Cathedral Grove: GORDO MUGSHOT Banner Ripped Off

by Ingmar Lee Friday June 11, 2004 at 02:12 PM

After having flown for 30 days our GORDO MUGSHOT BANNER, featuring the Drunken Gordo, and titled "BC's IDIOT PREMIER," "WEYERHAESER LACKEY" and "CONVICTED CRIMINAL" has been stolen.

Yesterday, after having flown for 30 days, our spectacular 122X152 Gordon Campbell Mugshot banner was ripped down and stolen from the Cathedral Grove protest site. The thief is suspected to be involved in the Milner Construction project on the Alberni/Qualicum highway and drives an early '90's Blue Ford pickup truck with a 'tidy tank' in the back. We are saddened to lose the banner, which received 1000's of hits daily, and resulted in many supportive and uplifting horn-honks.

The other day, a Milner boss shouted obscenities into our camp when he saw some of his surveyors stopping to read our info-board. "WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING TALKING TO THOSE ASSHOLES?!!" was what he shouted, seriously offending some of our senior-citizen supporters who had come bringing food. So far, there have been relatively good relations with Milner as they have had very difficult logistical and public relations in managing their construction work through the Grove which seriously disrupts the traffic flow. Now that RAIL AMERICA has shut down its rail connection to Port Alberni, all the freight to the city comes by transport trucks and the highway is extremely busy. (RAIL AMERICA's only business in the area now is OLD GROWTH FIR logging along their railway 'right-of-way.')

We do not have a fight with Milner, although I have told them that we would have a problem if they start laying in any infrastructure for the parking-lot interchange. (We have all the maps of the contract, but they say it hasn't been tendered yet)

Directly having lost the banner, Betty Krawczyk arrived in camp and gave us all hugs, and her visit was a big boost to morale. We do have great local support, and there are continuous visits by tourists and locals from both camps. Even the 'log-it-burn-it-pave-it' types soon understand the idiocy of Gordo's Pay-Park Scam when they see the scheme on the ground. Conspicuously absent from BC's only front-line blockade, - not a single visit or even an expression of support from BC's professional environmentalist community.

Absolutely zero! Is it possible that our big ENGO's somehow believe that A) Cathedral Grove is not worth protecting at all, is not a National icon, and is not the searing impression of Vancouver Island which resides in the minds of more than 1,000,000 tourist visits a year?, or that B) That if we were not there, that Campbell wouldn't be in there in a heartbeat with his felling crews?

A few months ago, I proposed on this list that perhaps somehow the BC environmental community could arrange it that some remotely operable video-surveillance gear could be provided for the security of those who are out at the front lines. Can't we do this!? I'm sick of hearing the lip-service to peaceful direct-action, which goes along the lines of, "...we need the full spectrum of activism and we appreciate the important contribution of direct action to..." We do feel vulnerable to being



attacked out there, and we all know that such violence is a regular occurrence at the blockades. If I'm going to get punched out by red-necks, I'd at least like to have the benefit of video-documentation. Regretably, such video footage of such is extremely valuable, and a simple surveillance should'nt be that expensive. If our ENGO's are prevented from supporting us because of agreements with funders or worse, perhaps they could at least provide some safety equipment.

Cheers, Ingmar

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Cathedral Grove: WEYERHAEUSER-MENACE Challenged

by Ingmar Lee Tuesday July 20, 2004 at 12:20 PM

Government defers Parking Lot scam until October, 'so as not to disrupt tourist traffic-flow.' Minister visits the Grove. CATHEDRAL GROVE CANOPY WALK is now up and running. Come on out and see the forest from 150 ft up!! FREE CAMPING! FREE FOOD!

Hello All,

Here's an update about Cathedral Grove, -(you can see photo's of the action and read about the issues in depth at our new CATHEDRALGROVE.SE

-(the other website is being used as a WCWC and CFS fundraising resource with absolutely zero of that revenue making it back to the Grove protest. We at the Grove protest do not recognize the other website)

WLAP Minister Barisoff, with Hupacasath Chief Judith Sayers and other government officials in tow visited the Grove unannounced last week and saw first-hand the defence infrastructure which has been established to protect it. He saw the fierce determination of forest defenders who called down from the canopy to say hello to the stranger from the complex of tree-sits. He was also given a tour of the heritage CMT forest, now threatened by Weyerhaeuser, where we have built a 1 km. trail.

While the Minister may believe that our protest at Cathedral Grove is about the stupid Gordon Campbell Pay-Park Scam, we have explained that actually, this is only one small aspect of our fight. We certainly agree that the current dog-and-pony show which passes for a parking-lot to serve the 1 million tourist visits (and growing) to this international BIG TREE icon is woefully inadequate. We agree that it poses a serious safety risk.

We agree that there needs to be a better parking lot, and we say that the existing TELUS fibre-optic cutline, which runs pallel to the

highway on the north side, all the way to Port Alberni is the most sensible option for the parking lot. Our research demonstrates that most visits to the Grove occur on the way to the West Coast. On the way back, people are tired, they are trying to catch a ferry or just get home. So it's only sensible to locate the lot on the north side of the highway. The fibre-optic line has already been cut through the woods, and an artful one-laner could be led through the big trees, and onto the cutline, where there is capacity with linear angle parking for thousands of vehicles. Then a single lane exit would lead back to the highway.

To locate the parking lot, as planned, on the south side will necessitate that 1 million tourist visits, with Winnebozo's, boat trailers, tourist buses et al, all making a left turn across the traffic, a 3 km hike to the Grove centre and back, with another left turn to get back onto the highway. The government has just spent \$4 million on improving the highway, so that traffic momentum could increase by 10 kph! And since RAIL AMERICA has discontinued rail service to Port Alberni, the traffic on the highway is intense. We believe that FOI requests will show that the government has never even considered asking TELUS for cooperation in jointly using the existing cutline. These are the kinds of obvious solutions which would have been brought up, had there been any public-process whatsoever in Cathedral Grove decision-making. Even the log-it-burn-it-pave-it types see this as a sensible solution, ecological argument aside.

Gordon Campbell has tried to take credit for an 18.5 hectare addition to the Grove recently, even though this deal was already negotiated and finalized by the previous government. What a sorry scam of a deal it was, with Weyerhaeuser gutting out the big trees throughout the whole parcel right to the park boundary, and then turning it over to the people of BC for \$1.7 million. How many century's would it have taken 'The Tree Growing Company' to realize that kind of revenue by growing trees? (Actually, 21 hectares was bought, but Campbell has removed 1.5 hectares for the parking lot. We expect that this piece will ultimately become a private-managed Robbins Parking-type operation)

Those of us defending the Grove see the Giant American forest-destroying company, Weyerhaeuser, as by far the biggest threat to the Grove. Over the past few years since they acquired MB, they have been systematically wiping out the last of Vancouver Island's magnificent primeval Douglas Fir forests. The extinction of the Vancouver Island marmot due to voracious industrial clearcutting, is taking place on Weyerhaeuser 'private lands.' Weyerhaeuser has hosted the Gordon Campbell government's Golden Eagle bait-killing spree over the past few years. They also host the governments wolf and cougar culling programs. Horrific private-land logging practices have reduced Vancouver Islands Blacktail deer populations by 80% in the last decade. Weyerhaeuser on Vancouver Island is conducting an ecological holocaust.

Weyerhaeuser is widely despised on Vancouver Island, even by the logging community, especially on account of the 1 million cubic metres of raw logs they export to the United States, driving the logs right through the Grove, right through idled Canadian sawmilling communities so that Americans can get the jobs. In fact, our 3 month occupation of Cathedral Grove has exposed a deep local hatred of Weyerhaeuser, even by its employees! They stop by and tell us.

We want Weyerhaeuser to go away back to the United States where they

belong. They take far more than our communities receive, and there's unemployment, wasteland and extinction in their wake. We say that 'expropriation' will be very well received politically by the public, and we see no requirement of compensation to the American company in exchange for the confiscation of ALL the remaining ancient fir forests of the Cameron Valley. Cathedral Grove is only 157 hectares, which is dwarfed by the rest of the ancient fir forest which takes up the remainder of the valley, and which is now slated for logging by Weyerhaeuser. We also want the old growth fir forest along the flank of mountain above Cameron Lake to be added to the park, which would then connect Cathedral Grove to Little Qualicum Falls Park. These acquisitions would greatly enhance and protect the Park, which cannot be left to the dreadful plans of Gordo and his master, Weyerhaeuser.

Our demands are very simple, logical, doable and sensible to anyone except the Weyerhaeuser-lackey's in the Gordon Campbell government. Whether Barisoff still thinks his Parking-Lot Scam is 'the best option for the Grove' or not, our fight doesn't end with winning the parking-lot battle. Our fight is bigger than that, we're there to protect what's left of Vancouver Island's magnificent Douglas Fir forests. More than 97% has already been exterminated.

Cheers, Ingmar

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Cathedral Grove protest attacked, RCMP ignores 911 call!

by Ingmar Lee Friday July 30, 2004 at 02:21 PM

A Drunken Maniac pulled into our camp and staggered out yelling and swinging a bricklayers pick-hammer

Hello All,

Two nights ago at about 9:15 PM our Forest Defense Blockade at Cathedral Grove was attacked by a drunken maniac wielding a bricklayers pick-hammer. The guy rampaged about the camp for about 20 minutes, cursing and smashing his hammer around. He then grabbed our axe and tried chasing our terrified volunteers, but they were able to escape into the forest. He was supported by accomplices, a man and a woman, who stood watching by the highway, near their small blue car. Unfortunately, in the chaos, we were not able to get a license number. One of the women was able to stop a car on the highway and get them to call 911. When I recalled 911 about 20 minutes later to make sure that the call had gone through they said that the police had responded, but couldn't find the protest site.

WHAT!! We've occupied the site since February, and the highway has been festooned in huge banners for months now! I have asked the RCMP for an explanation, but the response was that the Constable on duty that night is away on holidays now and won't be back for a few days!

Do we now forfeit our right to Police Service when we conduct protest actions? I expect that an instant Police response would be expected for a 911 call reporting a hammer-attack at any private residence. In BC, anti-logging protests are regularly attacked and Forest Defenders have been repeatedly assaulted. Several months back, I appealed to BC's organized environmental community for help in acquiring a video surveillance system which could be used to protect the Cathedral protest, and for inevitable future blockades. A single individual has responded with a \$100 donation, otherwise, BC's BIG ENGO's just couldn't care less

In other news, we are celebrating the 2nd week of the flying of our gigantic WEYERHAEUSER: GO HOME!! banner by the highway.

Cheers, Ingmar

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Cathedral Grove Issues Explained

by Ingmar Lee Sunday August 01, 2004 at 02:38 PM

The ongoing DIRECT ACTION PROTEST at the Grove is not only about Gordo's PAY-PARKING-LOT SCAM. Additionally, OPPORTUNISTS are cashing in on the issue, raising funds for their organizations, while doing nothing to help.

Hello All,

There has been a quite a bit of confusion as to what's been happening up at Cathedral Grove. We've been out at BC's only frontline, non-violent civil-disobedience action for the last 3 months working to develop our defence infrastructure to directly protect the forest. Regretably, groups such as WCWC and CFS keep USING the Cathedral Grove issue to raise funds for themselves without doing anything whatsoever to help. While these groups claim to be participating in the fight to protect the Grove, not one of them has been involved in the real action which has actually prevented the construction of the pay-parking lot thus far. Certainly, had the issue been left to WCWC or CFS talk, those big trees would be on the ground and Gordo's parking-lot would be well under construction.

BC's big ENGO's worry mostly about their funding and charitable status which could be reduced should they be seen to support any non-violent civil-disobedience action. Additionally, nearly all the biggest BC ENGO's, such as Greenpeace, Sierra Club and Forest Ethics have entered into agreements with Weyerhaeuser and ilk not to criticize their Vancouver Island devastations as a result of their 'concensus' over the Great Bear Rainforest, which if implemented would offer only 20% protection for that enormous and vital tract of forest. Nevertheless, the protest is very well supported by the local grassroots community, and the defenders are well fed and supplied with equipment. Spectacular photos of the trees are available on the

German 'Naturshatz' website:

<http://www.naturschatz.org/temp/CG-Gallery/CG-Gallery.html>

Our official website, based in Sweden (Europeans are more interested and concerned about Vancouver Island forests than people here) is at:

cathedralgrove.se

We don't recognize any other website.

When enviro's get muzzled by their proximity and agreements with industry and government, all the rest of us get disempowered. Apathy is born of disempowerment. We need less talk and more action.

Sincerely, Ingmar Lee

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Cathedral Grove Attacks Continue: One Thug Captured

by Ingmar Lee Thursday August 19, 2004 at 02:21 PM

The camp has been attacked by thugs wielding baseball bats, knives, and a pick-hammer every night for the past week. There are nightly drive-by paintball shootings

It's been totally crazy out at the Grove this week, with a huge influx of the general public during the day, who of course all want to hear about the issue, which of course is time-consuming and complex.

Then there are a continuous stream of travellers stopping in for information, and there are those who drop in for a few days, weeks or months, who all need climbing training, as well as defense coordination for the attacks. In the last two weeks there have been nightly attacks, -people running in with baseball bats, knives, pick-hammers, who slash tires and destroy our notice boards etc. We have constant drive-by shootings with paint-ball guns and last night, one of the defenders, Wolf was shot twice, receiving huge ugly welts. The entrance-way to our camp is all splattered with paint from these dangerous gunshots.

We have been pretty much on 20-hour duty for the past week and are all completely exhausted and very angry. The RCMP has not been responding to our repeated 911 calls, so we have taken our defence into our own hands and have built a system of snares, alarms and trip-wires through the forest. Two nights ago we caught one thug, dragged him into our camp, and tied him up.

We had attached a rope to a tree on one side of the road, laid an 8ft diameter loop in the road and buried it in gravel while the other end ran through a pulley tied about ten feet up a tree on the other side. The rope continued on to a 'runway' we had cleared in the forest, where three people waited for the signal to pull. We then set up a big banner on a tripod as 'bait' and positioned it just ahead of the buried snare, and then strung up a fishline trip which was attached to the pull-pin in a mini car alarm. Being after midnight on a Friday night, we expected trouble, and sure enough, the drunken red-neck hooligans showed up right on schedule after the bars had shut down. From the dark forest, we watched as one guy staggered out of his car and ran up to desecrate our banner. As soon as he tripped the alarm, our folks yanked on the rope and snared him by the ankles, lifting him right upside down and leaving him hanging there helplessly by both his ankles. Then the next team ran out of the woods, brandishing large rocks, and demanded that the guys buddies "FUCK RIGHT OFF NOW!!" or the cars was going to get totalled. His buddies, more concerned about the car, than our hostage, immediately took off and abandoned him! (our videographer captured the whole melee from one of the platforms, from where the scene was lit right up with a million candle-power spotlight.)

My idea was to strap the thug in our body harness and hoist him 100 feet up the tree, where he could hang for the rest of the night thinking about what an asshole he was, but cooler heads prevailed and we decided to call the cops on our cell phone. Miraculously, after so many futile 911 calls, the RCMP arrived immediately and took him away. Next day, two senior RCMP officers came to our camp to talk about the scene. They said, "Look Ingmar, you can't just be catching people like that and holding them hostage. That's against the law!" My reply was that "OK then, I'm ready to be arrested right now" and I held out my hands for the cuffs. I had numerous unanswered 911 emergency calls from our camp to back up my justification for our 'citizens arrest.' The cops declined to arrest me! (I wonder why?)

It speaks to the degree of courage these creeps have, attacking a peaceful protest camp with children and seniors, presumably on behalf of Weyerhaeuser and Gordon Campbell. I regret very much to say, that as far as I can see, violence and bloodshed is inevitable.

Cheers, Ingmar

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Cathedral Grove Parking Solution

by Ingmar Lee Sunday November 21, 2004 at 08:34 PM

The Friends of the Grove have submitted a proposal to WALLOP Minister Barisoff. This proposal solves the most immediate threat to the Big Trees, -the installation of a giant pay-parking lot on the windward edge of the Grove.

Hello all,

Please see below a copy of the letter submitted recently by the 'Friends of the Grove' to WLAP Minister Bill Barisoff. Our proposal provides a sensible solution to the serious safety and ecological concerns which have been raised by the Gordon Campbell governments plan. The minister has stated that he will make a decision about the pay-parking lot this month.

Forest defenders have been blockading at Cathedral Grove since February and have established a significant defense infrastructure to protect the Big Trees. Nevertheless, the pay-parking lot is only an aspect of the concerns for Cathedral Grove. Other major concerns include the deparadations of the American logging giant, Weyerhaeuser, which has been destroying tracts of ancient fir forest directly adjacent to the Grove. Also, Rail America/CP Rail, which discontinued rail service to Port Alberni last year, now uses the railway line to log ancient fir forests next to the Grove.

The 'Friends of the Grove' plan has been endorsed by Hupacasath Chief Judith Sayers and Qualicum Chief Kim Recalma Clutesi.

Cheers, Ingmar Lee

Honourable Bill Barisoff

PO Box 9047 Stn Prov Govt

Victoria, BC

V8W 9E2

November 15, 2004

Dear Minister,

To follow up on the public hearing on the Cathedral Grove parking lot issue in Port Alberni Oct. 25th, we would like to submit for your consideration our proposed parking lot site. We feel that this option has not been properly researched, is worthy of further assessment, and offers the safest, most ecologically benign solution if parking must take place within the park. Optimally, we feel that your ministry should work with the Ministry of Transportation to implement a shuttle bus service and remove parking from the park entirely. However, the alternative we present here has several advantages over the three sites proposed by the provincial government to date.

The parking lot site we propose (see attached diagram) would lead off Highway 4 near the existing parking lots. A single lane access would be wound carefully through the forest to the existing cutline right-of-way without impacting on any of the big trees. A linear parking lot with angle parking would be established along the cutline up to the park boundary. A single lane access would then lead back out to the highway.

An inexpensive pedestrian suspension bridge would be constructed across the highway to provide access to the heart of the Grove. Existing parking lots could be reserved for the approximately 20% of park visitors travelling eastward, and for people with disabilities and small children.

The advantages of this option are:

- SAFETY: This is clearly the safest option, as it eliminates left-hand turns across the extremely busy highway.
- The big trees along the established cutline are already wind-firm, as demonstrated by the lack of windthrown trees along this corridor, and would not need to be removed.
- It would enable easy access to the park on both sides of the Highway 4.
- It would preclude several kilometres of trail-building through sensitive forest and riparian areas required under the other options.
- It would have minimal ecological impacts.
- It would not impede on the riparian area or the floodplain of the Cameron River.
- It would not impede on critical Roosevelt elk habitat, as the other three options do.
- It would minimize windthrow damage to the big trees of our precious park.

PLEASE NOTE: This proposed lot site is entirely within the existing park boundaries, and will not require any purchase or expropriation of land.

Please carefully consider this solution to the current parking lot debacle.

Respectfully submitted,

On behalf of the Friends of Cathedral Grove:

Ingmar Lee

Krista Roessingh

Chief Councillor Judith Sayers

Hupacasath First Nation

Chief Councillor Kim Recalma-Clutesi

Qualicum First Nation

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Secret Deal at Cathedral Grove?



The breaking news from Cathedral Grove concerns a secret deal to annex land from Weyerhaeuser's timber holdings to MacMillan Provincial Park. The problem is, the land has already been logged.

The Friends of Cathedral Grove have discovered that Weyerhaeuser and the Campbell government have reached a secret agreement to add about 140 hectares of recently logged land to the world-famous park. This new addition would be withdrawn from Weyerhaeuser's private holdings which virtually surround the park. It would be in addition to the 21-hectare stump-field which the previous government acquired from the giant American logging company for \$1.7 million in 1999. In the latest proposed addition, 75% is also a stump-field.

This backroom deal excludes the old-growth forest remaining in the Cameron Valley that is currently outside the park boundaries and which is slated for logging by Weyerhaeuser. The Friends of the Grove (FROG) are demanding that some 400+ hectares of standing ancient forest in the Cameron Valley directly adjacent to Cathedral Grove should be expropriated from Weyerhaeuser. Has this government even considered offering the return of these lands to First Nations whose historic stewardship and usage is so clearly in evidence? If not, why not?

During the several weeks before Christmas, survey crews had been seen working in the Weyerhaeuser clearcuts on the south side of the Grove. When questioned by people currently blockading the construction of the Campbell government's proposed 150-slot parking lot, the survey team initially refused to say what they were up to. (The Cathedral Grove marathon blockade is now into its 10th month of 24/7 occupation.) Finally when directly questioned by Friends of Cathedral Grove, they admitted they were surveying "the new addition to MacMillan Park." Island videographer and FROG member, Richard Boyce, was able to snap a photo of the new addition boundaries over the shoulder of the surveyor (see attachment). Richard Boyce says that back-room land deals between government and Weyerhaeuser will continue to leave First Nations and the general public without a voice.

Ingmar Lee, a Friend of Cathedral Grove spokesperson said, "Here's Weyerhaeuser once again trying to flog off a logged-out stump-field to the people of BC for millions of dollars. The land is now useless to Weyerhaeuser and is nothing but a tax-burden to them. The final ancient fir forest still standing in the Cameron Valley must be protected."

Friends of the Grove are clear that this government purchase of a stump-field does not in any way mitigate the negative impacts of the government's current plan to locate a large parking lot on the floodplain upwind of the Grove. They continue to support the more benign alternatives they have presented to the government.

The ancient forests of the Cameron Valley are some of the last remnants of Vancouver Island's once-magnificent Douglas fir forest, 97% of which has been decimated by 150 years of industrial logging. FROG member Krista Roessingh said "Culturally Modified Trees (CMT's) can be found disbursed throughout the old-growth in the Grove. They attest to the careful, sustainable use of these forests by First Nations, and prove their historic tenure and ownership of these lands. We think they should be returned to the true stewards who cared so lovingly for these

precious forests for millennia. Why hasn't the Province considered returning the land to them as part of recent land transfers? Weyerhaeuser apparently has no concern for these historic artifacts, as CMT stumps can be found throughout their Cameron Valley clearcuts."

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Cathedral Grove: The Weyerhaeuser Vision: Another Stumpfield Addition

by Ingmar Lee Thursday February 17, 2005 at 01:42 AM

Regarding the latest Weyerhaeuser effort to bilk the BC Public into purchasing another Steaming Stumpfield to add to Cathedral Grove

Dear Port Alberni Mayor and Council,

Thank you for your email letter to the Friends of Cathedral Grove dated January 13th, 2005. This was in response to our January 5th 2005 press release which exposed the secret deal being hatched between Weyerhaeuser and the provincial government to add 140 hectares of mostly logged out stumpfield to Cathedral Grove.

You will now have gotten a sense of the extreme frustration that the Friends of Cathedral Grove have experienced over the secret backroom negotiating which has gone on over Cathedral Grove. The Park is in the UNESCO Arrowsmith Biosphere Reserve and the charter for these reserves requires community involvement. Both the provincial, and regional governments should remember the commitment they gave when the application was made to the UN to get this designation. Cathedral Grove is in the Regional District of Nanaimo which is responsible for supporting the principles that should govern the functions under the biosphere "umbrella". The RDN board passed a motion calling for community involvement in any consideration of the location of the parking lots. The RDN and Qualicum Beach have been supportive of our efforts. To our knowledge, Port Alberni and the Alberni-Clayquot Region have not.

One expects that major acquisition transactions should at very least involve consultation with the City of Port Alberni which has such an enormous stake in the future of the Grove. For a World-Class park with the international stature of Cathedral Grove, any provincial government not entirely bought by giant logging companies would invite an thorough and credible public discussion over the future of the park. Cathedral Grove is a priceless economic generator for the mid-Vancouver Island region which will be enhanced by the addition of the remaining tract of old-growth, not logged out stump-fields.

The Friends of Cathedral Grove believe that a vastly expanded park in the Cameron Valley, which would encompass ALL the magnificent ancient fir forest contiguous to Cathedral Grove will offer a far greater revenue to the economies of the region than a once over clearcut pass by Weyerhaeuser. We envision such efforts as the creation

of a bike/hike trail between Qualicum Beach and Port Alberni through the Grove along the now abandoned Rail America/CN Railway line and the improvement of swimming access and camping at Cameron Lake. Our vision includes respecting the amazing archaeological resources which can be immediately discovered throughout the remaining ancient forests of the Cameron Valley, in the form of Culturally Modified Trees. The protection of such resources will be a valuable way to demonstrate respect, and to maintain good relations between the City and local First Nations. Weyerhaeuser has already destroyed countless CMT's in the Cameron Valley, perhaps illegally, including within the last 21 hectare stumpfield addition to the Grove, which they sold to BC tax-payers for the rip-off price of \$1.7 million in 1999. CMT stumps can be found in Weyerhaeuser clearcuts right to the park boundary. It was this logging incursion which has also exacerbated the wind-throw problem which is damaging Cathedral Grove.

The Friends of Cathedral Grove believe that the City of Port Alberni will be far more generously rewarded into the future if it would pursue actions to stop Weyerhaeuser and TimberWest from ripping off their community by the wanton plunder of raw-log exports. Each of these giant corporations are thumbing their nose at Port Alberni citizens while exporting more than 1,000,000 cubic metres of raw logs each from the forests surrounding your city, so that Americans can saw up that timber. Additionally, Weyerhaeuser's logging plan for the forests adjacent to the Grove was set-up by John Eden of their South Island Timberlands division which means all the work and wood would probably go to the East coast of the Island. All Weyerhaeuser logging in the Cameron Valley is covered by the South Island District meaning that it is completely out of Port Alberni's logging district, therefore NO LOCAL JOBS!

In 1999, after logging right up to the Cathedral Grove Park boundary, Weyerhaeuser ripped off the people of BC by selling them a 21 hectare stumpfield for \$1.7 million. The land was useless to Weyerhaeuser and they simply unloaded a tax-burden. The Gordon Campbell government now claims credit for adding that stumpfield to the park. The people of BC don't want Weyerhaeuser's cast-off wastelands added to the park. They want the magnificent ancient forests which are directly adjacent to the park to be added.

Please use your powers to denounce that sleazy business, and push instead for the expropriation of the 400+ hectares of unprotected old-growth forest next to the Grove to add to the park. This will be a priceless pro-active action and vision your grandchildren will thank you for.

Sincerely, The Friends of Cathedral Grove

Sent: Thursday, January 13, 2005 8:31 AM

Subject: Cathedral Grove

January 12, 2005

VIA Email

Friends of Cathedral Grove

Ingmar Lee

Krista Roessingh

Richard Boyce

At a regular meeting on January 10th, 2005, Port Alberni City Council received your press release dated January 5, 2005 expressing concern that additional lands may be added to MacMillan Park.

City Council's belief is that if lands are added to the park then there should be an exchange for timber rights that will benefit the whole community.

Thank you for bringing your concerns to Council's attention.

Yours truly,

CITY OF PORT ALBERNI

Russell Dyson

City Clerk

Davina Sparrow

Administrative Assistant

City of Port Alberni

Tel. (250) 720-2822

Fax (250) 723-1003

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'Cutting Edge' security at Cathedral Grove

by Ingmar Lee Wednesday February 23, 2005 at 10:16 AM

While BC's institutional Enviro-orgs compromise with Gordon Campbell and Logging corporations, BC's activist community remains vulnerable to Attacks by Thugs

Hi all,

Last summer, while the Cathedral Grove direct-action blockade was under nightly redneck attack, I appealed to the BC environmental community for security equipment to protect our camp. Friends of the Grove activists were being attacked by late-night baseball-bat, pick-axe and knife-wielding thugs, and one blockader was shot twice in a drive-by paint-ball shooting which injured him quite seriously.

The equipment I appealed for included a remotely-powered web-cam which could beam up 24/7 live video footage to a web-site where people around the world could witness the on-going activity at our 'cutting-edge' front-line of our blockade. Although BC's institutional ENGO's will not support, or much less participate in citizen-driven direct-action efforts, I thought that this might be a way that they could get around their charitable-status funding agreements which so neuter their ability to help forward the protection of our ancient forests. I was wrong. Of the multi-million dollar BC environmental-protection budget, which is controlled by several large professional ENGO's, this was too much to ask.

I estimated that the equipment would cost about \$5000 and it would be extremely valuable for our security, and for the security of future direct-action efforts. British Columbian's recognize, after 4 years of the Gordon Campbell corporate assault on our forests, that the polite 'collaborative-compromise' approach taken by BC's professional ENGO institutions just has not produced acceptable results in protecting our dwindling primeval forests. Gordon Campbell will take great delight in knowing that the once-powerful BC forest-protection effort has been reduced to petitions, web-site letter-writing appeals and polite negotiations between select ENGO's and the destroyers.

Why is it that Greenpeace BC, for example, is involved in effective direct action campaigns everywhere else in the world, (see below) while here in BC, they languish behind the scenes in the corporate boardrooms, working out pathetic compromise deals with their partners, Weyerhaeuser, Interfor, CANFOR, Norske Skog and ilk such as the 21%-protection of the Great Bear Rainforest? Here below, a Greenpeace activist, using the very equipment we require here in BC, writes from the roof of a New Zealand power-plant, where they have been camped out for the past two weeks protesting the pollution.

Direct action is, unfortunately, a REQUIREMENT for forest protection in a Gordon Campbell world. Our biggest environmental groups may prefer to ignore the desperate efforts of forest-loving citizens who are shut out of the discussions which go on in the corporate and government boardrooms. They should understand that such protest, while perhaps not in the mandate dictated by their funders, will be helpful even if they choose to enter into such negotiations. The outrage that drives citizens to block the forces of destruction is essential support for their bargaining position. When activists get attacked at the blockades, this also supports their bargaining position, but ONLY when there is reliable evidence of the attacks.

No charitable agreement or funding condition should refuse the purchase of security equipment for BC activists. We dread the day that citizen-driven activist effort will be entirely snuffed out by the intimidation tactics of thugs, or by the apathy born of disempowerment which results when a select elite group of professionals co-opts the environmental discussion and talks compromise with the destroyers. The

Cathedral Grove action continues now, after an entire year. Currently, there is not even a cell-phone at the camp. Our protesters are very, very vulnerable.

What kind of disaster will have to happen to our front-line activists before Cathedral Grove, and other action protest finally gets some help from BC's institutional 'environmental' groups??!!

Sincerely, Ingmar

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Cathedral Grove Parking Lot: Same Scam, New Spin

by Ingmar Lee Friday November 11, 2005 at 01:04 AM

Pondicherry, India

Here is the latest BC Government scheme for crashing their same old parking lot into Cathedral Grove. It appeared on the Ministry of Environment website today. "MacMillan Provincial Park Safety Enhancement Project"

(NB: We call it "Cathedral Grove." We do not accept the "MacMillan" moniker for the world-famous Big-Tree Park. H.R. MacMillan was amongst the most voracious forest-destroyers that ever walked the Planet')

Regarding the latest BC Government scheme:

"MacMillan Provincial Park Safety Enhancement Project"

The only thing that's changed with the Gordon Campbell government's approach to solving the Cathedral Grove Parking Lot dilemma is that they've employed some new spin-meister to twist the optics on their same old proposal. If you look at this announcement carefully, you'll see that this is exactly the same old parking lot scheme, all packaged up with a brand new spin. They have 'studied' several of the options which were put forward at their last 'Public Consultation' meeting in Port Alberni last year, and are now spinning their same old arguments against these alternate proposals.

In their 'Relative Impact Matrix' analysis, you will see exactly the same old government parking lot proposals which were put forward 3 three WLAP-Ministers ago, by Joyce Murray. They are listed as 'Options A, B & C.' These are the abundantly discredited options which have resulted in the Tree-sitting blockade which is now nearing 2 years of 24/7 occupation. Options A,B & C are all within 50 metres of each other, are on the floodplain, are in the Elk habitat, are on the windward side of the Grove and will require further cutting of old-growth and buffer trees, and will require two left-hand turns across the busy Highway 4 for the approximately 1,000,000 tourist

visits a year. Glaringly absent from this scheme is the fact that these Options will require the construction of a 3km ballasted, gravelled and culverted loop-causeway through the Grove so that visitors can access the Big Trees at the heart of the park.

In the 'Relative Impact Matrix' table, the government analysis show-stoppers for the various options put forward are marked with red dots and squares which appear in the 'Safety Columns.' Predictably, it is only the governments prior 'proposals', A,B, and C which come out without any red dots. Other proposals, including the FROG proposals are 'red-dotted' on the grounds that the public will need to cross the highway to get to the Big Tree heart of the park, which they are deeming a show-stopping safety issue. This is in spite of the fact that these Options clearly included the construction of a simple pedestrian cable-bridge over the highway, or even an underpass. Our proposals have CLEARLY ADDRESSED THIS SAFETY ISSUE.

Although the government proposals A, B & C are not red-dotted in the safety columns, the major aspect of the serious safety concern of their proposal, -the 1,000,000 tourist-visits a year, many large holiday vehicles will need to make TWO left turns across the highway! (our research has demonstrated that most visitors to the Grove stop there on their way to the west coast, -nobody is disputing this) We have approached numerous traffic safety experts regarding these left hand turns, and there is a unanimous agreement, that there will be accidents, as there are anywhere where people make left turns across a highway. THE GOVERNMENT HAS NOT ADDRESSED THIS SAFETY ISSUE.

It is abundantly clear that nothing whatsoever has changed and this government is determined to force its giant pay-parking lot exactly as it has done before. It is very important that people make some effort to help FROG (Friends of the Grove) at this critical juncture. The FROG effort, against so many odds, has been instrumental in keeping those trees standing now for two years, and has built wide-spread local, national and international support for its campaign. FROG has also worked carefully with local First Nations. There is wide-spread awareness of the Cathedral Grove issue, and people are watching it closely.

Everyone who is concerned about Cathedral Grove has been demanding a fair and open public discussion and process to resolve this serious issue. This latest stumbling effort by the Campbell government simply will not cut it.

For the real story on Cathedral Grove, please visit:

<http://www.cathedralgrove.se>

Cheers, Ingmar

(NB: We call it "Cathedral Grove." We do not accept the "MacMillan" moniker for the world-famous Big-Tree Park. H.R. MacMillan was amongst the most voracious forest-destroyers that ever walked the Planet')

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Environment Minister Barry Penner Sneaks into his own Cathedral Grove Public Meeting, and then Ducks Out

November 17, 2005

Ingmar Lee

As any Vancouver Islander who reads the news knows, the Friends of Cathedral Grove have been blockading the Campbell government in the world-famous Big Tree Park for going on two years now. Eight tree-sitting platforms have been installed and occupied to prevent them from bulldozing a giant 150-slot pay-parking lot into the park. Everybody agrees that the current parking lots are unsafe, but the governments chosen location does nothing whatsoever to address the safety issue, and will damage the fragile and vulnerable ecological integrity of the park. The Cathedral Grove protest has involved hundreds of people locally, across Canada and around the world. A lot of ideas and a huge vision for the park have been put forward and the Friends of the Grove have been demanding a legitimate public forum to discuss its future. On November 9th, 2005, the Ministry of the Environment issued a press release titled "Public Input Sought on Parking at MacMillan Park." The press release went on to say that "The Ministry has scheduled two Open Houses where the public can comment on the park values that are important to them, and review the various studies, maps and options that have been developed to address the parking situation. BC Parks staff will be on hand for one-on-one discussions."

BC Environment Minister Barry Penner is quoted in the release: "For over 30 years there has been talk about the risks to public safety due to the current parking lot. No-one questions the fact that the parking situation at MacMillan is dangerous," Penner said. "We have a number of options and we want the public to give us input and feedback."

Fast forward to the Ministry of Environment's "Public Consultation Open House" meeting which was held in Port Alberni on Tuesday, November 15, 2005. Environment Minister Barry Penner was scheduled to be present and to address the meeting. But that didn't sort of, exactly happen. BC Parks representative Chris Kissinger who chaired the meeting informed the full-house crowd that "Regretfully, the Minister will not be able to attend tonight's meeting," and with that, he ran the government's power-point presentation which explained to the crowd that the government had already decided where it was going to bulldoze the massive 150-slot pay-parking lot. Furthermore, Kissinger added, no comments from the crowd were to be recorded, and no environmental review would be conducted.

Where exactly, might one ask, is the government's new choice location? Turns out, in exactly the same spot which has already been so thoroughly discredited by expert hydrologists and ecologists for the degradation to the Grove which will result. The elk herd will be displaced, more swaths of big trees will blow down, fish habitat will be destroyed, and the whole parking lot will be submerged in heavy rain events. What is more, the governments choice does nothing whatsoever to address the serious safety issues of a million tourist-visits-a-year, driving large holiday vehicles, making 2 left turns across the busy highway, one each way getting in and out of the parking lot!

As Chris Kissinger worked through his power-point presentation, a



shadowy figure quietly slipped into the darkened room and stood in the back, hidden from the audience behind some display boards. But suddenly the man was recognized by the keen eyes of a reporter from the Qualicum Beach newspaper. It was none other than Environment Minister Barry Penner! As soon as he was noticed by the reporter, Penner quickly exited the room, but not before she snapped his photograph. She tried to catch up to him but the Minister was too fast and he got away. Subsequently, the Ministers office confirmed that "the Minister was in attendance at the meeting."

It's amazing that the BC government has not learned anything at all from its two years of stalemate with the Friends of Cathedral Grove. In fact, their staunchest pro-parking lot proponent, MLA Gillian Trumper was trounced in the last election, after she staked her reputation on the parking lot. The fact is that the Friends of the Grove have raised a critical mass of public support in the local communities, across Canada and around the world. The Friends have also worked respectfully with local First Nations whose careful stewardship over millenia has left this irreplaceable forest legacy.

The Prime Minister of Canada himself recognised the special importance of Cathedral Grove in his 2005 Canada Day address to the nation: "Behold the wonder of our landscapes – from the old-growth forest of Cathedral Grove on Vancouver Island, dominated by trees hundreds of feet tall and hundreds of years old..." It is time that the BC government gets past its intransigent, pig-headed pay-parking lot scheme, and the silly antics of its Environment Minister and starts listening to the many forest lovers who want nothing but the best possible future for Cathedral Grove. The Friends of the Grove demand that this government finally produce a credible, respectful public process, and axe this idiotic pay-parking lot scheme. Ingmar Lee is a 21-year veteran BC Treeplanter. He recently spent 5 months rigging tree-sitting platforms in the forest canopy at Cathedral Grove

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November 18, 2005

Dear Steven Heywood, Editor of the Parksville/Qualicum Beach News Please publish this letter.

Cheers, Ingmar Lee

I'm disgusted and angered by the slanted coverage of the government's recent sham 'Public Consultation' meeting in Port Alberni concerning Cathedral Grove that appears in the current issue of your newspaper. But as far as the PQB News is concerned, this has become routine, ~a typical, expected rote response when it comes to the Cathedral Grove effort. Your paper has been a constant thorn in the side of citizen efforts to protect the park, always sneaking around, looking to dig up some dirt, or to add some derogatory, condescending remark. Your coverage has been an exercise in PR stenography for the Campbell government's pay-parking lot scam.

The PQB News has a barely concealed sneering and hostile attitude to the efforts of those of us who are concerned about this government's ramshackle and ramrod attitude towards this world famous big tree park. The PQB News has never bothered to examine the vision that the Friends of Cathedral Grove have been putting forward for the best possible

future of the park, or the reasons that they've had to resort to an exhausting, dangerous and difficult volunteer 2-year civil-disobedience blockade to protect it. It has been beyond the myopic and archaic vision of your paper to imagine a vision for careful, sensitive development and expansion of this magnificent jewel and potentially awesome economic generator, right on the verge of your community.

Those who are concerned about Cathedral Grove come from a wide diversity of society throughout the circulation district of your newspaper, and are not just the people your coverage has characterized as a bunch of filthy tree-hugging hippy loafers hanging around in the park, blocking progress and making a nuisance of themselves. This image of the Grove protest that you continue to perpetuate speaks clearly to your inability to see the much deeper picture of the great struggle that many, many people, from all walks of life, have endured. It is most regrettable that BC government inertia and intransigence has made it necessary for those valiant frontline defenders who have braved nearly two years of hardship out in the forest to remain on vigil. A visionary, progressive and thoughtful government would have commenced with a legitimate, credible public process to resolve this issue long ago. And a fair, balanced and investigative news media would have gone beyond the log-it-burn-it-pave-it attitude that has reduced Vancouver Island's once magnificent Douglas fir forest to that sorry, vulnerable and fragile little refugia-tuft remnant that is Cathedral Grove.

If Gordo gets his pay-parking lot, we'll have Steve Heywood and the Parksville Qualicum Beach News largely to thank for that.

Whatever you might think of the tree-sitting blockade, without it, Gordo would have his parking lot by now. Whatever you might think of our concerns, we believe that, bottom line, this parking lot will severely damage Cathedral Grove.

Sincerely, Ingmar Lee

www.cathedralgrove.se

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Cathedral Grove Treesits need help!

November 19, 2005

Dear Fellow American Treesitters,

Some of you might know about the Cathedral Grove treesitting blockade on Vancouver Island, BC, which is approaching its second year of occupation. We've got 8 treesitting platforms averaging 100 ft. many of which are connected by an expanding network of traverse lines. The government wants to install a 150-slot parking lot in this world famous big tree park. Although the were unsuccessful in getting a court injunction to remove us from the forest, nevertheless, if they get a chance, they'll be in there with their chainsaws, cutting down ancient Douglas fir trees in a flash.

I'm sure all of you are well aware of the difficulties which arise when authorities choose the 'siege' option, -basically putting their plans on hold to wait out the sitters. As is usually the case, the Cathedral Grove Treesit effort, is by necessity, an anarchist, non-violent civil-disobedient direct action effort, and our crew is in a constant ebb and flow, coming and going. Basically, because of the injunction, we don't anticipate an immediate police assault on the blockade, and the chainsaws cannot operate while there are people in the forest, so we're not obligated to occupy the platforms 24/7, so we have maintained a comfortable base-camp in the forest. Nevertheless, after nearly 2 years, our core group of climbers and supporters are getting very exhausted.

Recently, the government has begun another initiative to force its giant parking lot, and now more than ever, we need help! If there's any tree-sitters out there who would like to do a stint in Canada, we would certainly appreciate your company! Our 8-in-total platforms are very luxurious, -we've got 3 platforms in one giant fir, complete with kitchen, tent and shower even. Anyone want a nice holiday in the forest in Canada?

Here's part of the Cathedral Grove tree-protection strategy which we think is very effective. We recommend it to all tree-sitting efforts. Part of our ongoing defense infrastructure work has been to continue randomly expanding out our spiders-web of traverses throughout the threatened forest. As we have been working at the canopy level, most of these ropes cannot be seen from the ground, but we're not worried if some of them can be seen, and have even flagged a few. We've made comprehensive public announcements about the traverse networks, to make it clear to all parties that if anyone insists on cutting Cathedral Groves trees, they will need to climb every tree to see whether there's a rope on it before a single one is cut down. (a tree cannot be cut if it's been tied together to a neighbouring tree at tree-top level -Workers Compensation will not allow it, for example). These are huge trees and to climb each one will require a lengthy operation conducted by an expensive team of professional climbers. In the event of forced removal, the rope clearing effort buys significant extra time for the trees, even after the sitters have been removed.

Of course, many people have been involved in setting the traverses, but as I've said, people come and go freely in the "anarchist rules" endeavour, and nobody knows where they are. Additionally, we always say that those who have been setting traverse ropes, well we smoke a lot of pot, so we can't remember which trees were tied together. There are lots of tricks which we have learned about building spiders webs in the forest canopy, and we are eager to share our knowledge!

We could sure use some help! And I'm sure that if some of you folks can spare yourselves from all your necessary actions, such international cross-pollinations will certainly see your help returned!

Sincerely, Ingmar

[www.cathedralgrove.se](http://www.cathedralgrove.se)

