



Sunshine Coast Conservation Association

PO Box 1969 · Sechelt · British Columbia · V0N 3A0

March 20, 2004

Honorable Premier Campbell and Cabinet
PO Box 9041 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC
V8W 9E1

via e-mail and regular post

Re: Protection of biodiversity and the economic future of our region.

Dear Premier Campbell and Honorable Ministers:

We are writing today to invite the cooperation and participation of government in a regional planning process that we are initiating to identify a system of protected areas for our region. We are convinced that this process is necessary to protect the natural biological diversity of the region and support a vibrant future for all affected parties. Our decision to proceed in this manner has been influenced by numerous circumstances including:

- the loss of Ungulate Winter Range designation in the Sunshine Coast Forest District (SCFD) on October 15, 1998,
- the failure of the Identified Wildlife Management Strategy to respond to urgent priorities,
- the lack of a biologically realistic and administratively achievable process for the establishment of Wildlife Habitat Areas,
- the cancellation of the Sunshine Coast LRMP in 2001,
- the severe limitations on implementation of Landscape Unit Planning,
- the general lack of clarity and accountability in the Forest and Range Practices Act,
- the intention of government not to overturn category A logging approvals in old growth deficit areas, mountain goat winter ranges and the habitats of at-risk species (as stated in the draft Old Growth Order and various rationales),
- the devastating effects of unregulated private land logging on the natural resources and economic potential of the Sunshine Coast.

With less than three percent of the SCFD land base represented in parks as a result of the Protected Areas Strategy, it is apparent that there is not enough habitat protected to ensure a future for nationally recognized at-risk species. Other important biological resources, such as public drinking watersheds (most notably the Chapman/Gray Community Watershed) are not protected from industrial activity. The people of the Sunshine Coast deserve a fair, open and scientifically based process to resolve these and many other fundamental issues.

As a contribution toward resolution of these issues in the SCFD we propose to adopt the criteria and processes developed by Forestethics, the World Wildlife Fund and the World Resources Institute, whereby endangered and high conservation value forests can be identified at a regional scale.

This project would not take the place of a comprehensive land use planning process. It will, however, serve to identify areas where harvesting and other industrial activity should not take place until a system is in effect that will protect the form and function of essential ecosystems. An added benefit of this project is that it will assist forest-company stakeholders in achieving independent verification of their Environmental Management Systems through international certification programs. The Sunshine Coast Forest District will be the second area in BC to have the endangered forests model applied. Our intent is to help create a secure future for our communities and all life.

We will attempt to include First Nations, government, industry and other affected parties, especially where we can pool resources to reach the common goal of identifying the endangered forests of our region. We respect the rights of First Nations to give their informed consent to any activities involving their traditional lands and resources.

Thank you for your attention to these important issues. Please let us know of your interest.

Yours truly,

Daniel Bouman, Executive Director

Maria Hunter, Researcher

Sunshine Coast Conservation Association

cc: all district forest licensees