

**ENDANGERED
& UNPROTECTED**

CANADA'S
**Great Bear
Rainforest**

Johnston Creek, a healthy habitat for endangered coho salmon in the Great Bear Rainforest, has been approved for logging by Interfor.

Interfor and Logging in the Johnston Creek Watershed of the Great Bear Rainforest

JOHNSTON CREEK IS A PRISTINE VALLEY of British Columbia's ancient temperate rainforest and is part of an important cluster of eight intact rainforest valleys in the Rivers Inlet area of the Great Bear Rainforest.

THE FACTS

Ecology

- In the Johnston Creek watershed, grizzly bears, moose, deer, wolves, mountain goats and cougars can be found. It is also an important nesting ground for marbled murrelet, a bird species listed as vulnerable to extinction in B.C.
- One of the rarest rainforest types, the sitka spruce alluvial flood plain, is found throughout the valley.
- The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) identified Johnston Creek as "excellent rearing habitat" and "one of the best coho salmon producers in the (Rivers) Inlet." Habitat destruction from logging could push stocks into extinction.

- Declining runs of pink and coho salmon support a significant grizzly bear population in the Johnston Creek rainforest valley. Interfor's logging places both the salmon and grizzlies at risk.
- The Johnston is a slow moving river – sensitive to any change in forest cover. Even slight increases in temperature or water flow will impact on coho salmon reproduction.

NOTE: No adequate scientific inventories have been carried out for this rainforest valley to date.

The First Nations

- The Oweekeeno First Nations traditionally occupied this region. The majority of Oweekeeno now live in the town of Rivers Inlet.

The Logging Company

- Interfor has licence rights to clearcut log many large, intact rainforest valleys in the Great Bear Rainforest.
- Interfor plans to log 18 pristine valleys and key ecological areas of the Great Bear Rainforest in the next 5 years.



Interfor road construction in Johnston River (spring 1998) to provide logging access into the intact Johnston Creek watershed.

- Interfor has failed to comply with the Forest Practices Code on 414 occasions, and has been found guilty of breaking the law an additional 136 times. In 1997 the B.C. Forest Practices Board found three potentially devastating instances of non-compliance stating, "Interfor did not take adequate measures regarding the stability of unstable terrain."

The Logging Plans

- In the mid-coast timber supply area where Interfor is logging, the rate of logging is currently set at 47% above the yield considered to be sustainable.
- In the winter of 1998, Interfor began construction of a 16 kilometer road through the Johnston Creek watershed to access this pristine valley and the adjacent pristine Sandell watershed for clearcutting. In May 1998, within two weeks of road construction on a steep, unstable slope in the watershed, two landslides occurred as a result of the road building.

- In the summer of 1998, as a result of intense pressure from environmental organisations, Interfor informally agreed to suspend controversial road building in the Johnston watershed until mid-1999. The fate of this precious valley remains undecided.

The Rainforest

- Temperate rainforests are one of the most endangered forest types on earth. Globally over 50% of these rainforests have already been logged and the Great Bear Rainforest is one of the largest remaining tracts of temperate rainforest left. This ancient forest represents one of the last chances to preserve a fully functioning sample of this endangered ecosystem.
- Eighty per cent of Canada's large coastal rainforest watersheds have been logged or have roads built into them, and virtually all of what remains is scheduled for road-building or logging within the next ten years. British Columbia has protected only 6% of its low elevation ancient rainforests.

SOLUTIONS

- According to a report by internationally renowned conservation biologist Dr. Michael Soulé, up to 45% of the temperate rainforest should be deferred from logging until we can determine exactly how much is needed to protect rare and threatened species from extinction. Otherwise, Dr. Soulé maintains, if B.C. continues with the policy of protecting only 12% of the land base, up to 50% of the species could be threatened with extinction.
- Greenpeace is calling for protection of the remaining intact rainforest valleys such as the Johnston watershed and an end to industrial clearcutting and the construction of new roads in B.C.'s ancient temperate rainforest.

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