

## **East Creek - Klaskish Inlet - Vancouver Island - British Columbia - Canada**

11 May 2008 report by Richard Boyce

Just outside of Port Alice, driving up a steep slope crisscrossed by switchbacks and covered with 20 year old trees, we followed a massive Grapple-Yarder Tower/Machine on a flat bed truck being towed by a giant off-road logging truck and also being pushed by a 2nd off-road logging truck. Slowly but surely this massive rig, owned by Western Forest Products, was making its way towards another fresh clear-cut to pull the carcasses off another hillside where old growth forest stood for many centuries.

After driving 100km through a maze of rough logging roads west of Port McNeil we finally drove over the ridge that separates the valley of Klaskish Creek from East Creek. Both of these watersheds flow into Klaskish Inlet, which opens out into Brooks Bay just north of the Brooks Peninsula. In the past I have explored the low valley bottom of East Creek, accessing this lush rainforest by kayak.

Ancient trees grow in the rich alluvial plain of this ancient valley. Water flow carved this valley out of the mountains over millions of years, leaving rich deposits of soil along the creek as it today meanders to the Pacific Ocean. The temperate rainforest canopy is a complex and interconnected ecosystem that took 10,000 years to evolve since the last ice age.

Towering Sitka Spruce, Massive Candelabra Western Red Cedar, Giant Western Hemlock, Pacific Yew, Balsam Fir, and many smaller deciduous trees. The ground cover is lush with shrubs of many species, abundant with flowers and later berries. Moss and lichen drape everything. Wildlife is abundant.

The temperate rainforests found in the low valley bottoms on the west coast of Vancouver Island have a biomass greater than anywhere on earth, meaning that the density