

Thanksgiving Meditations in Cathedral Canyon

By Phil Carson (Friends of Cathedral Grove)
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Rabbit Everyone,

Today I enjoyed a rare gift. I spent Thanksgiving Day in the Spires of a Cathedral: Awe-inspiring, breath-taking, Beauty Full. My spirit soared like the shear intricately sculpted rock face that rose 500 feet straight up above me, reflected in the clear blue-green pools of the Cameron River. This is unmediated art, primeval creation, the Sacred. Lichen draped giant trees above. A thick carpet of mosses, lichens and ferns beneath my feet where delicate mushrooms pushed their heads through an intricately woven tapestry made of millions of subtle hues of green. Music, poetry, sculpture, architecture, all the gifts of creation are brilliantly orchestrated by the conductor's conductor here in the Cameron River Canyon, "Cathedral Canyon," flowing directly into Cathedral Grove.

The Thanksgiving was mediated however. There was ample evidence where chainsaws had ripped and spewed while the roar of helicopter had silenced the chorus of tree frog and song bird. Apparently some people's soul's are so deadened by the pursuit of money that nothing is Sacred. Even the Cathedral's Spires are being desecrated. Obscene florescent pink tape marking of imminent death by chainsaw is everywhere, encircling ancient Cedar, Fir, Spruce and Hemlock. These doomed trees are right on the flood plain right on the banks of the Cameron River. Any disturbance will negatively impact the hydrology, including everything downstream: fish habitat, the provincially designated community drinking watershed, and the Class A provincial park Cathedral Grove.

My Thanksgiving Day meditation was tainted with black clouds of who could perpetrate and condone this desecration. The conclusion was us. If we own shares in Brascan our investment decisions are contributing directly to the destruction of extremely endangered plant and animal communities. Brascan has taken over from Weyerhaeuser and those pink ribbons and chain saw scars indicate that they too have put quarterly profits ahead of the protection of fish, drinking water, culture, soils, wildlife, and the

well being of future generations. Incidentally if we voted for Gordon Campbell's Liberals we supported a government that has done everything in its power to make sure that the quarterly ledgers of distant corporations are the managing criteria that determines the fate of endangered species, ancient cultures, and sacred places.

It was FROG (Friends of Cathedral Grove) who brought me to this gorgeous canyon. During the last two years, since 2004, FROG activists have continuously maintained a 100 foot high tree top canopy sit-in designed to protect the Grove from the chain saws of the "Parks Department" of the BC government's Ministry of Environment. FROG brought public attention to the complexity of challenges that threaten Cathedral Grove's very existence. FROG believes that the public understands and supports their initiative and had hoped that the BC government and the logging industry had awoken to this emergency situation. More and more BC citizens are recognising the environmental catastrophe that we collectively face as a species. The hopes of FROG were short lived as the BC government and its corporate partners refused to take responsibility for their role in this eco disaster.

The Friends of the Grove are moving from a reactive to a proactive stance. They are willing to work with all levels of government, First Nations, NGO's, the scientific, arts and business communities and the citizens of the world to ensure that Cathedral Grove and BC's forests, cultures, and ecosystems are shown the respect they require to continue to survive and flourish. They will aid in research and share their artistic talents and local knowledge to contribute to a respectful dialogue. They will not however, they assure me, stand idly by and continue to witness the mining of our high alpine forests, the death of our salmon runs, the extinction of our wildlife, the pollution of our drinking water, and the desecration of our sacred places.

They can count me in. When I watch my children excitedly running by the side of a river filled with splashing salmon or enraptured by a tiny spotted faun I am filled with the spirit of Thanksgiving Day. We have so much here in Super Natural BC. We have so much to lose.