



An association of individuals and groups committed to engaging with community, government, and industry to advocate for the conservation and expansion of parks and protected areas within the Mount Arrowsmith watersheds.

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NEWLY-FORMED ARROWSMITH PARKS AND LAND-USE COUNCIL JOINS WITH 25 COMMUNITY GROUPS TO PROTECT THE CATHEDRAL GROVE ECOSYSTEM FROM LOGGING -- SAYS "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH"

The Arrowsmith Parks and Land-Use Council aims to see the end of logging in the area affecting Cathedral Grove. At a formal signing ceremony held Tuesday, February 10, in Parksville, over 25 community groups came together to put their signatures to a Parks Council letter to Brookfield Asset Management asking for a final settlement of the ongoing logging threat after years of clearcutting in the Cameron.

First Nations, provincial organizations, community groups, and environmental professionals addressed themselves to the Toronto-based, multi-national corporation which holds the Cameron River valley--including part of the Cathedral Grove ecosystem--among its private resource lands through its Bermuda-based subsidiary, Island Timberlands Limited Partnership. Over and over, community groups from Nanaimo, Parksville, Qualicum Beach and Port Alberni repeated the message, "business as usual is not an option anymore".

As recently as October, 2008, further cutting near MacMillan Park was threatened by Island Timberlands.

Emphasizing the protection of forest ecosystems rather than an unsustainable clump of trees, Colin Frazer, from the Port Alberni chapter of the Council of Canadians, said "we want to preserve a real forest, not a theme park."

An honoured guest and endorser of the Parks Council action was Joe Foy, National Campaign Director for the Western Canadian Wilderness Committee. He believes the decades of mindless exploitation for profit which drove land use decisions in the past may be over. "Now we see community groups coming together to express their values about nature and place, especially such a place as Cathedral Grove - so widely known and loved. Success in your joint effort here will be a huge thing for Cathedral Grove, but, more than that, it will be a powerful example for other communities and other beloved places that need protection."

Paul Grinder, spokesman for the host group, the Arrowsmith Parks and Land-Use Council, said "There is more at stake than a corporate bottom line -- even private citizens can't do things on their property which cause a loss to their neighbours. As matters presently stand, we have no assurance that Island Timberlands will not proceed with their Cameron logging plan as soon as it suits them. We are seeking reliable, long term protection for the Cathedral Grove ecosystem."

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(see Page 2 for background)

Background:

The Arrowsmith Parks and Land-Use Council has been meeting since logging was threatened in Cathedral Grove in October, 2008. It intends to make the protection of the Cameron River valley and the Cathedral Grove ecosystem its primary goal in the coming months.

Members intend to cast a caretaker's eye over other protected areas as well. The Council describes itself as an association of individuals and groups committed to engaging with community, government, and industry to advocate for the conservation and expansion of parks and protected areas within the Mount Arrowsmith watersheds.

THREE PHOTOS (ATTACHED TO COVERING EMAIL):**Digital File name: "Cameron Valley Logged"**

Caption: "Steep-slope logging in the Cameron valley. Photo by Richard Boyce."

Digital File name: "StumpyPair"

Caption: "360 year old Douglas Fir trees cut by Island Timberlands on the steep banks of the Cameron River, just upstream from Cathedral Grove Provincial Park. Photo by Richard Boyce."

Digital File name: Garth Lenz photo - Logging at Port Alberni Hump

Caption: "Island Timberlands logging near the top of "the Hump" in the Port Alberni valley, December, 2007" ©Garth Lenz / ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

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