

WalbranWednesday Sample Script – Office of Forest Minister Steve Thomson July 6th

**We can't predict exactly how your conversation will go, but this script can help guide your call and provide you with sample responses to possible scenarios. Depending on the staff's response, you may not have the opportunity to express all the points you want to make during the call. But at the very least, be sure that the Minister's office notes your call and registers your opposition to their approval of logging in the Central Walbran Valley.*

When you are speaking to the Minister's staff, please remember to be respectful.

Hi, my name is _____

I'm calling to ask the Minister of Forests to rescind the permit for cutblock 4424 in the endangered Central Walbran Valley on southern Vancouver Island, and to set the rest of the Central Walbran off-limits to logging.

Who can I talk to about cancelling this logging plan?

**Note: We've targeted Minister Thomson's offices before, and there's a chance his staff will tell you he's well aware of and working on the issue.*

If they say this, you could say:

**That's great that the Minister is aware. What is the Minister doing right now to resolve this issue?
What is Minister Thomson's plan for protecting the Walbran Valley?**

This winter and spring, several cutblocks of rare old-growth rainforest were clearcut in the Walbran Valley. The recent [photos of clearcut logging in the Walbran](#) caused me great distress.

In late January, a citizen was arrested in the Walbran for protesting the logging – the first arrest of a logging protester in the Walbran Valley in over 20 years. The Minister must step in and rescind cutblocks on the north side of the Walbran River now, before the situation escalates further.

If they allow you to proceed with voicing your concerns, or transfer you to someone else who will take your call:

The Central Walbran Valley is the largest intact tract of old-growth temperate rainforest left on southern Vancouver Island. Over 90% of low-elevation old-growth on the Island has been cut down, and there simply aren't enough of these monumental forests left to continue to log.

Old-growth forests provide habitat for endangered species, they purify water, and they store more carbon than younger forests, which we need to reduce the impacts of climate change. Intact forests with extremely large and old trees are also irreplaceable resources for culture and tourism

I have a personal connection to the Central Walbran because... (use your own words and explain your own personal reasons for wanting to protect this area – be yourself!)

This is an opportunity for the government to show leadership by listening to the thousands of people speaking up about this issue and saving this very special area of ancient forest from being destroyed.

If they respond by stating that the Ministry has a stringent regulatory process for cutblock approval, or tell you that logging permits have been approved after environmental review and First Nations consultation:

I know that any industrial logging in an old-growth area as rare as the Central Walbran Valley will have serious lasting impacts, no matter how “sustainable” the logging practices claim to be.

If they say state the need to balance the environment with economic needs:

The area we are asking to be protected in the Central Walbran Valley is just 486 hectares, which is a very small fraction of the licence area in TFL 46. The Great Bear Rainforest agreement announced earlier this year sets 5.4 million hectares off limits to logging – Vancouver Island rainforests are just as important, and 486 hectares isn’t a radical ask.

(You may refer them to the Wilderness Committee’s map of the area, which was shared with the Ministry months ago and is available at WildernessCommittee.org/walbran)

If they mention that the area in question is right next to Carmanah-Walbran Provincial Park, which has already been protected:

The unprotected Central Walbran Valley forest contains monumental trees of a large size and great age that is equal to or better than what’s found in the park, and this area is worthy of full protection. Our goal is to have it added to the park.

If/when they tell you that the District office would be a better place to call:

We’ve called them on WalbranWednesday before! They didn’t provide an answer, so I’m following up with the Minister’s office this month.

If/when they try to end the call:

Please rescind the permit for cutblock 4424 and reject permit applications for the eight other planned cutblocks in the Central Walbran Valley, north of the Walbran River. Thank you.

If they ask if they can take your contact information and have someone call you back:

It's up to you – you can either give them an opportunity to return your call, or use some of the points in this script to write an email to the Ministry.

Other helpful points, facts and statistics:

- Some of the biggest trees in the world are within Teal Jones' cutblocks – including 1,000-year-old trees, some with circumferences as big as a living room. Forests with trees like this are living monuments, and should be treated as such.
- More than 90% of low-elevation old-growth on Vancouver Island has already been logged.
- More than 6,500 people – in addition to the City of Victoria – have written to the Minister of Forests and asked him to rescind the permit for Teal Jones' cutblock 4424 and stop old-growth logging in the Walbran Valley.

If you email, you could include links to:

- New photos of destroyed old-growth forest in the Walbran Valley:
https://www.wildernesscommittee.org/victoria/photos_new_clearcuts_central_walbran_valley
- A recent report on the state of the forest on Vancouver Island:
https://www.wildernesscommittee.org/sites/all/files/publications/2016_VI-stand_paper_web.pdf