

1985  
*a proposal to create . . .*



## CANADIAN LANDMARKS

### PROTECTION FOR OUR LARGEST, TALLEST AND OLDEST TREES

**IN THIS CENTENNIAL YEAR** of Canada's National Parks, let it be the goal of Canadians to protect our

most massive and ancient living things, our old growth trees. Some of these trees sprouted ten centuries before the establishment of our first National Park; their lives span more time than written Canadian history. In the last few decades we have come dangerously close to eliminating all of these giants—testimony to our power to forever change the natural landscape.

The Canadian Landmarks programme is a recent initiative by Parks Canada to protect our country's rare and exceptional natural features. To date only one Landmark has been established, the Pingos of Tuktoyaktuk. Unlike the National Parks which encompass entire natural ecosystems, the Landmarks are small. Combined, the four areas proposed as Canadian Landmarks in this paper encompass less than 4 square miles.

Politicians in British Columbia heavily advocate the "multiple use" of our resources, permitting all users including loggers to share every environment. This will not work for Canada's largest, tallest and oldest trees. If they are cut down we will have lost an irreplaceable national treasure.

It makes sense that a few selected areas be set aside to inspire visitors, to allow all people a chance to experience the very finest biological expression of our land. We must also consider the scientific and educational value of our most outstanding forests. The monarch trees hold the exemplary genetic key.

The four heritage forests proposed in this paper, Nimpkish Valley Douglas Fir, Carmanah Valley Sitka Spruce, Cheewat Lake Western Red Cedar and the Red Creek Fir Canadian Landmarks, together encompass an area only twice the size of Vancouver's Stanley Park. Their recreational and scientific value to future generations is worth far more than the lumber value of their cut trees. In a province that is clearcutting its virgin forest at a rate of over 500 square miles every year, surely these small Canadian Landmarks are affordable.

Help give Canada a National Parks Centennial gift that is truly priceless—not a monument in stone or bronze, but the preservation of living things that have surpassed this country's age more than ten times over.



NIMPKISH ISLAND—CORE OF THE PROPOSED NIMPKISH VALLEY CANADIAN LANDMARK



## NIMPKISH VALLEY DOUGLAS FIR CANADIAN LANDMARK

There was a time when 300 foot tall Douglas Firs were common in B.C., a time when miles of valley bottom lay cloaked in these great trees, their spires gently swaying in the wild, free wind.

Most of the largest and tallest Douglas Firs grow on eastern Vancouver Island and in the Lower Mainland and have long since fallen to the loggers' saws, but a few remain.

The finest of those that survived grow on the rich floodplain of the Nimpkish River on north-central Vancouver Island. In 1973, an Ecological Reserve was proposed to protect some of the tallest of the Nimpkish firs, but after twelve years the now greatly reduced proposal has still not become an official reserve. Meanwhile the very tallest of these trees, some nearly as tall as 30-storey buildings, stand unprotected outside of the proposed Ecological Reserve. They are soon to be logged, destined for B.C.'s plywood mills. Time is running short, but it is still possible to save these trees from a fate they do not deserve.

The proposed Nimpkish Island Ecological Reserve could form the 37 acre core of a 500 acre Canadian Landmark, protecting the finest of these tall trees.

Second only to the California Redwoods in height, the Nimpkish tall trees are one of the natural wonders of the world. To allow them to be destroyed would be a national disgrace.

## CHEEWAT WESTERN RED CEDAR CANADIAN LANDMARK

Cheewhat, "River of Urine", is a rather ignoble name for this beautiful stream that wends its way through marshland and rainforest in the Nitinat Triangle of western Vancouver Island. Beyond the brackish lower reaches, in a forest-rimmed basin, lies Cheewhat Lake. Here the forest rises undisturbed beyond broad meadows and shallows choked with rushes. Amid the tangle of green on the eastern shore, great Western Red Cedars stand 14 and even 16 feet in diameter and 200 feet tall. Some are twisted and crowned with "candelabras" of silvered spires. Others rise ramrod straight to form a dense overhead canopy.

Their future is uncertain despite being within the proposed boundaries of Pacific Rim National Park. Politics have overshadowed the true value of the land, and the ugly spectre of the dollar threatens the 1000 year old trees.

The 650 acres that is the finest of the Cheewhat forest should become a Canadian Landmark within Pacific Rim National Park. To drift on misty morning waters in the shadows of these ancient sentinels is to know that there are places on earth that must be cherished for what they are, not for what we can make of them.

## RED CREEK FIR CANADIAN LANDMARK

The "Red Creek Fir" near Port Renfrew on Vancouver Island is very likely the largest tree remaining in Canada and the second largest Douglas Fir on earth. This monarch, generously left by B.C. Forest Products, stands alone as a reminder of the days when such giants were not uncommon.

To protect this tree from wind and erosion, a small area (20 acres) must be left standing around it.

As a first Canadian Landmark for the protection of our heritage trees, it is only fitting that, in this centennial year of our National Parks system, we honour our very largest living thing.



WESTERN SWORDFERN THRIVE BENEATH THE GIANT SPRUCES

## CARMANAH CREEK SITKA SPRUCE CANADIAN LANDMARK

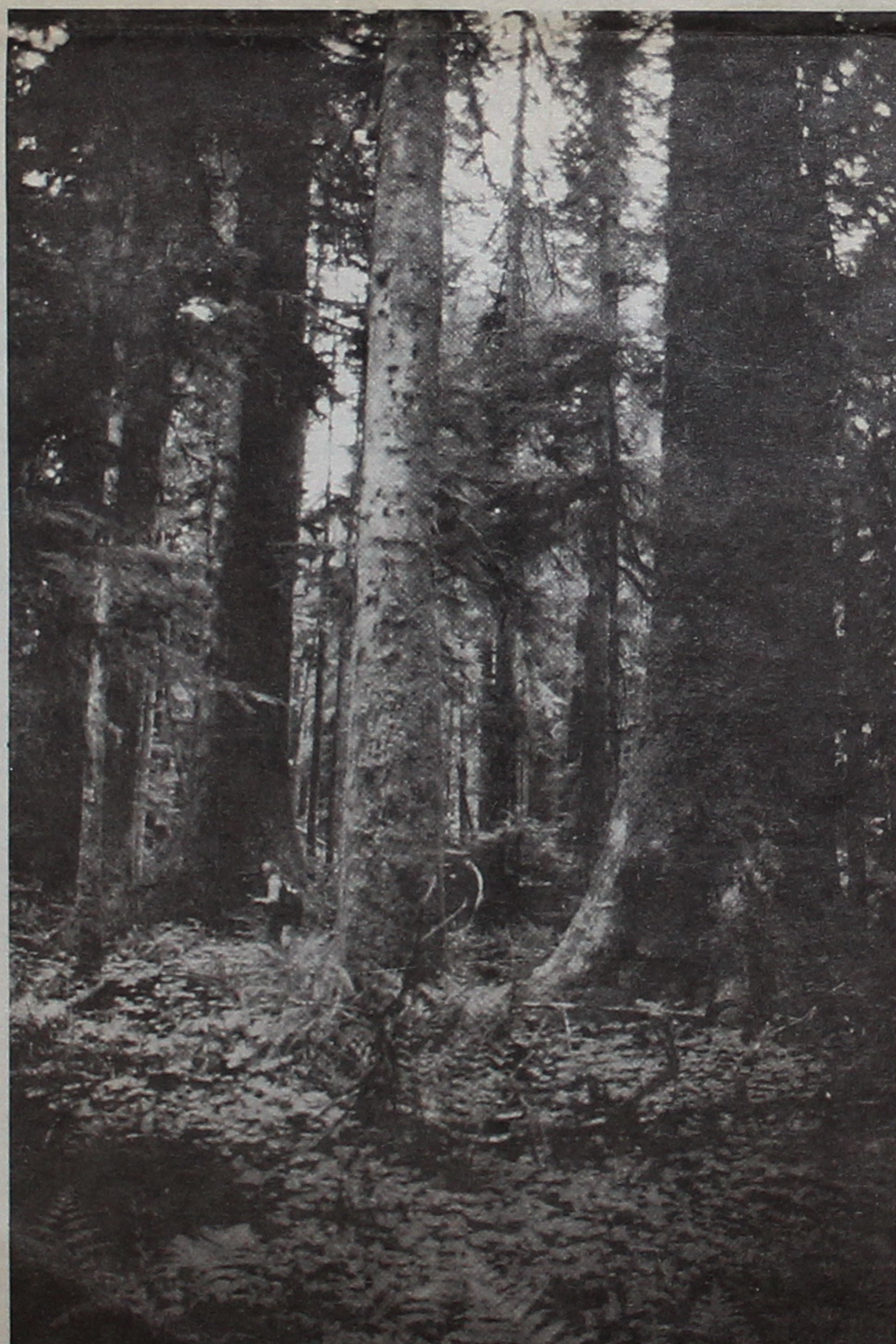
A classic B.C. "tall tale" is told of an enormous Sitka Spruce 26 feet in diameter and 309 feet tall in Carmanah Valley. While it has never been found, if there is a place where such a tree could grow, it is in this lush rain-forest valley of southwestern Vancouver Island.

Several miles inland from the sea, the valley broadens and the creek meanders between aisles of towering spruce, the climax stage of a forest evolution that began with the last ice age. Trees eight, ten and sometimes twelve feet in diameter rise over 250 feet above the forest floor of ferns and herbs. Tiny backwaters reflect the grey-green shafts of smooth, scaly bark.

The main grove extends perhaps 500 acres. Linked to the famous "West Coast Trail" of the proposed Pacific Rim National Park by a 300 acre strip bordering rugged Carmanah Canyon, this area is a first class Canadian Landmark candidate. Nowhere in existing Canadian parkland is there such an outstanding spruce forest, and every year fewer opportunities remain to protect one.



PARKS CANADA CREW MEASURES AN 11 FOOT DIAMETER SPRUCE IN CARMANAH VALLEY



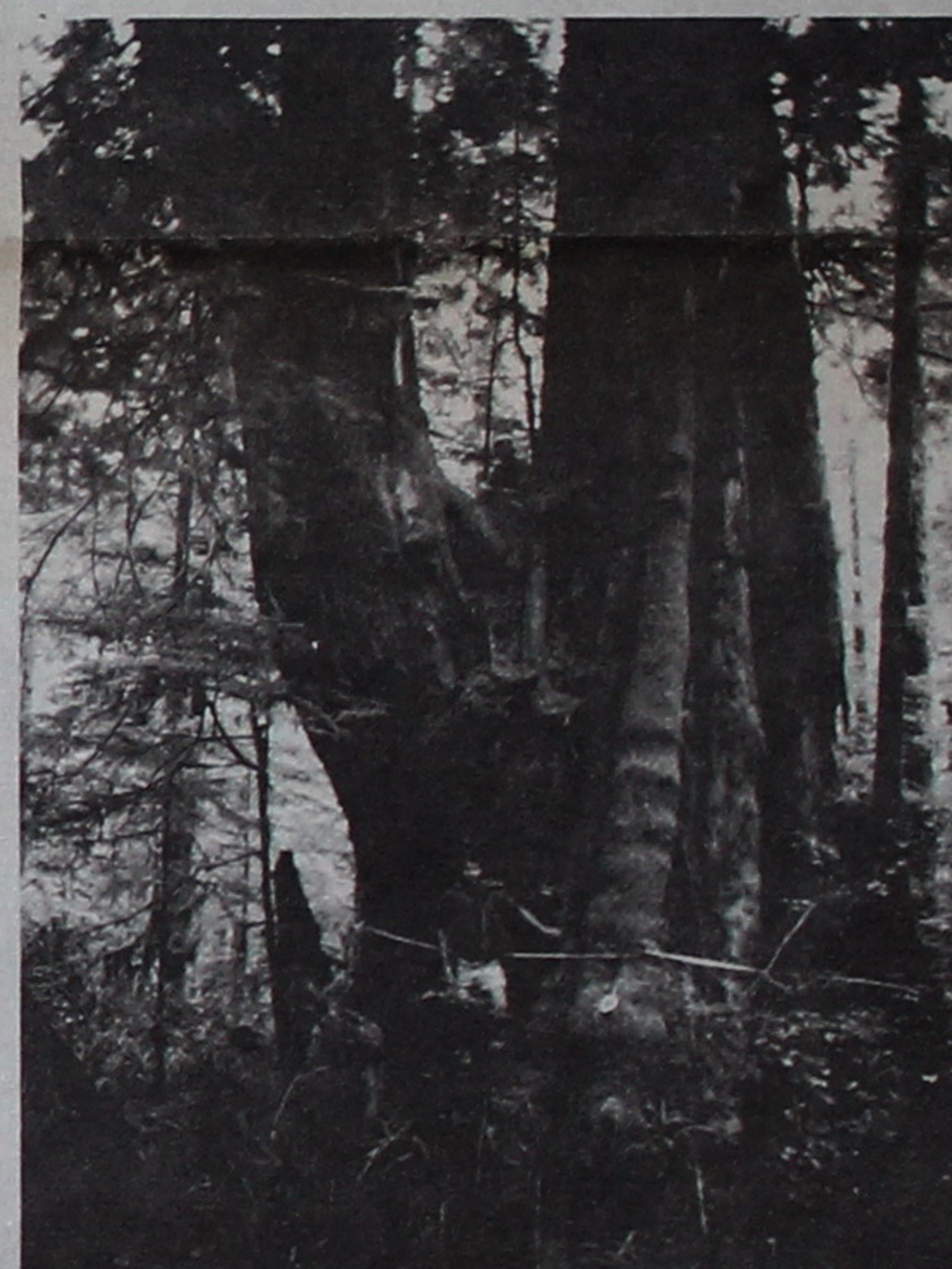
SITKA SPRUCE FOREST—IN THE PROPOSED CARMANAH CREEK CANADIAN LANDMARK



A GNARLED CEDAR MORE THAN 18 FEET IN DIAMETER—IN THE PROPOSED CHEEWAT LAKE CANADIAN LANDMARK



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE NEAR-RECORD-SIZED CEDAR AT CHEEWAT LAKE



14 FOOT DIAMETER WESTERN RED CEDAR IN THE CHEEWAT FOREST—NOTE PERSON SITTING IN THE TREE FORK

## BRITISH COLUMBIA'S LARGEST KNOWN LIVING TREES

SPECIES	BREAST		BRANCH	LOCATION
	CIRC.	HEIGHT	SPREAD	
Red Alder <i>Alnus rubra</i>	18'-11"	97'	74'	Stanley Park, (Vancouver)
Western Red Cedar <i>Thuja plicata</i>	58'-8"	130'	50'	nr. Cheewhat Lake, (Vancouver Island)
Western Red Cedar <i>Thuja plicata</i>	61'-0"	140'	53'	Meares Island
Yellow Cedar <i>Chamaecyparis nootkatensis</i>	30'-0"	130'	50'	Cypress Prov. Park
Black Cottonwood <i>Populus trichocarpa</i>	22'-6"	130'	61'	(Nineteen Mile Creek,) Whistler
Black Cottonwood <i>Populus trichocarpa</i>	20'-6"	180'	—	Goldstream Prov. Park
Pacific Dogwood <i>Cornus nuttallii</i>	11'-8"	45'	43'	West Vancouver
Douglas Fir* <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	41'-2"	241'	75'	east of Port Renfrew, (Vancouver Island)
Pacific Silver Fir <i>Abies amabilis</i>	20'-10"	230'	45'	Ecological Reserve No. 98 (Chilliwack R.)
Pacific Madrone <i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	16'-6"	80'	50'	Savary Island
Pacific Madrone <i>Arbutus menziesii</i>	15'-0"	80'	78'	nr. Esquimalt Lagoon
Bigleaf Maple <i>Acer macrophyllum</i>	35'-2"	95'	64'	Stanley Park, (Vancouver)
Garry Oak <i>Quercus garryana</i>	15'-6"	80'	80'	North Saanich
Garry Oak <i>Quercus garryana</i>	14'-6"	115'	45'	North Saanich
Pacific Yew <i>Taxus brevifolia</i>	9'-2"	73'	30'	Fulford Harbour, Saltspring Island
Pacific Yew <i>Taxus brevifolia</i>	7'-1"	72'	25'	nr. Durrance Lake, Saanich peninsula

\* height measured to 3-4 foot diameter, broken top.

HELP ESTABLISH  
CANADIAN LANDMARK  
**Protection for Our  
Largest,  
Tallest  
and Oldest Trees**



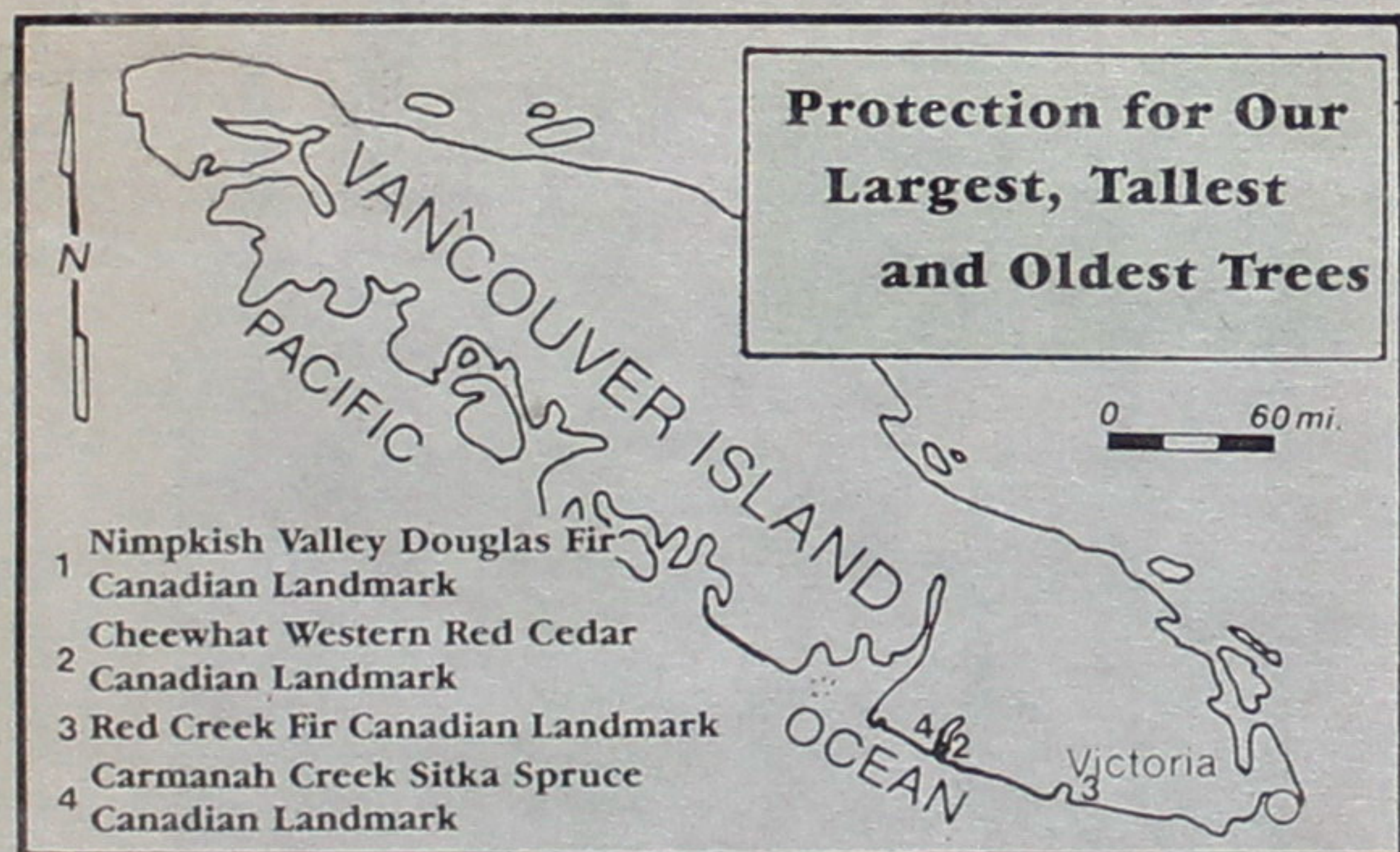




RED CREEK DOUGLAS FIR—CANADA'S MOST MASSIVE TREE—NOTE PERSON STANDING AT ITS BASE



MEASURING THE RED CREEK FIR—A PRIME CANDIDATE FOR A CANADIAN LANDMARK



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ENCROACHING CLEARCUTS THREATEN CANADA'S TALLEST TREES, THE 300 FOOT DOUGLAS FIRS OF THE PROPOSED NIMPKISH VALLEY CANADIAN LANDMARK

- ☐ Yes, I support the creation of 'Canadian Landmarks' under the *National Park Act* to protect Canada's largest, tallest and oldest trees.
- ☐ I enclose ☐ \$1000 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$20 ☐ other to help your committee identify potential 'Canadian Landmark' sites and inform the public of the importance of saving these stands of trees.
- ☐ I know of a tree (Canadian native species) that may be of record size. (Please describe on separate enclosure.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City / Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return** to Western Canada Wilderness Committee  
 1200 Hornby Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6Z 2E2

**Write to the Federal Minister of the Environment** asking her to create Canadian Landmarks to protect these outstanding trees.

Honourable Suzanne Blais-Grenier, MP  
 House of Commons  
 Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H3