



Western Canada Wilderness Committee  
Educational Report co-published with



Friends of Caren

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# CANADA'S oldest tree on Sunshine Coast...



John Field

*Chainsaw found it first*

*Photo above: Canada's oldest known tree: sixty five generations of people came and went during the life time of this 1700 year old yellow cedar before it was logged five years ago. Remnant ancient forest nearby need urgent action to avoid a similar fate.*



*Favoured nesting sites for marbled murrelets, Western and Mountain hemlocks 600-1000 years old dominate much of the Caren Range Upland forest.*

John Field

## **3% of Sechelt Peninsula's ancient forest remains...more cut blocks planned**

Although time ran out for this particular tree and 97% of the original forest cover on the Sechelt Peninsula, it is believed that even older trees still stand in the remaining 3%. Despite repeated calls to halt logging, the response from the B.C. Forest Service is "business as usual". Application has been made for three more cut blocks (see "Speak now or forever ancient stumps", on page 4) which, if approved, will further whittle away this remnant.

Friends of Caren, a local citizens' organization, has developed a Caren Range Uplands Park Proposal that calls for the protection of the remaining 800 ha. (three square miles) of sub-alpine forest.\*

It is doubtful whether the two remaining areas of ancient sub-alpine forest can exist as viable ecosystems if any more is logged. Although no detailed biological inventories exist and little is understood about this complex type of forest, what is known already is gaining national attention. Ancient forests, including trees well over 1,500 years old, provide shelter and protection to a wide assortment of wildlife and plants. The Caren Range Uplands forest is believed to support one of the largest known breeding colonies of the threatened Marbled murrelet. It is well understood that a major threat to this secretive sea-bird is loss of nesting habitat due to clearcut logging.

\*(The park proposal total of 8,000 ha. also cover surrounding areas of second growth, included for watershed, wilderness, and recreational reasons.)

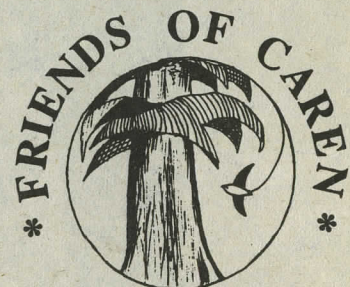
# 0% wilderness on Sunshine

## Abused Caren Uplands causes downstream disasters

For the second time this year, Lions Creek (N. arm of Myers Creek), which feeds Pender Harbour Wildlife Society's Salmon Enhancement Hatchery has flooded and caused heavy mortality of eggs and fish. Lions Creek is one of the many small creeks with headwaters in the Caren Uplands now suffering from clear-cutting.

*"It had already happened in February of 1991, which killed 150,000 eggs and fry..."*

One of the most dangerous things that can happen in a clearcut area is a "rain on snow event". This is exactly what took place on November 19th of 1991 and it spelled disaster for 12,400 soon to be released fingerling coho salmon. It



Save Canada's Oldest Forest



had already happened in February of 1991 killing 150,000 eggs and fry. Silt and sand plugged the hatchery's life-giving water intake and deprived thousands of fish of vital oxygen.

The Ministry of Forests has allowed 38% of Lions Creek to be clearcut (mostly in 1988-90). If planned logging is allowed to proceed, 65% of the Lions Creek watershed will be cleared by this time next year.

Undisturbed ancient forest regulates, filters and provides the highest quality water available in creeks. The Caren Uplands Park Proposal would preserve the remaining ancient forest so vital to this watershed.

What the Pender Harbour Wildlife Society along with all Sunshine Coast residents require is responsible stewardship of the forest.

## **BOLD STATEMENTS**

*"As a forester I am in a position where I feel that forest land has to be protected for all of the people of the province, not just for a few bus loads of people who want to come up a logging road,"*  
Chris Ortner, International Forest Products.

Reply

**"We are talking about saving shreds of some of the world's oldest genetic material for future generations to see and enjoy. The people of Europe and Asia, as well as most of North America, have nothing comparable."**

Paul Jones, Friends of Caren

*"I will categorically state that [B.C. Ministry of] Parks are not interested in that area as a park,"*  
Barry Mountain, Ministry of Forests, District Manager, Powell River Forest District.

Reply

**"Mr. Mountain has himself made a retraction of this statement. He is not a spokesperson for B.C. Parks. It is time that he stopped negatively influencing the process of enacting sound forest stewardship on the Sunshine Coast which is trying to determine areas where water quality, wildlife habitat, recreation and heritage values far outweigh timber values. The Tetrahedron and Caren Uplands areas are perfect examples where preservation must prevail."**

Ken Lay, Wilson Creek, B.C.

Huge clearcuts surround what is left of the Caren's ancient forest. This aerial view is of the upper most part of Lions Creek watershed.



John Field

Down stream erosion was severe when heavy rains combined with snow melt from clearcuts to send Lions Creek on a rampage in November of 1991.



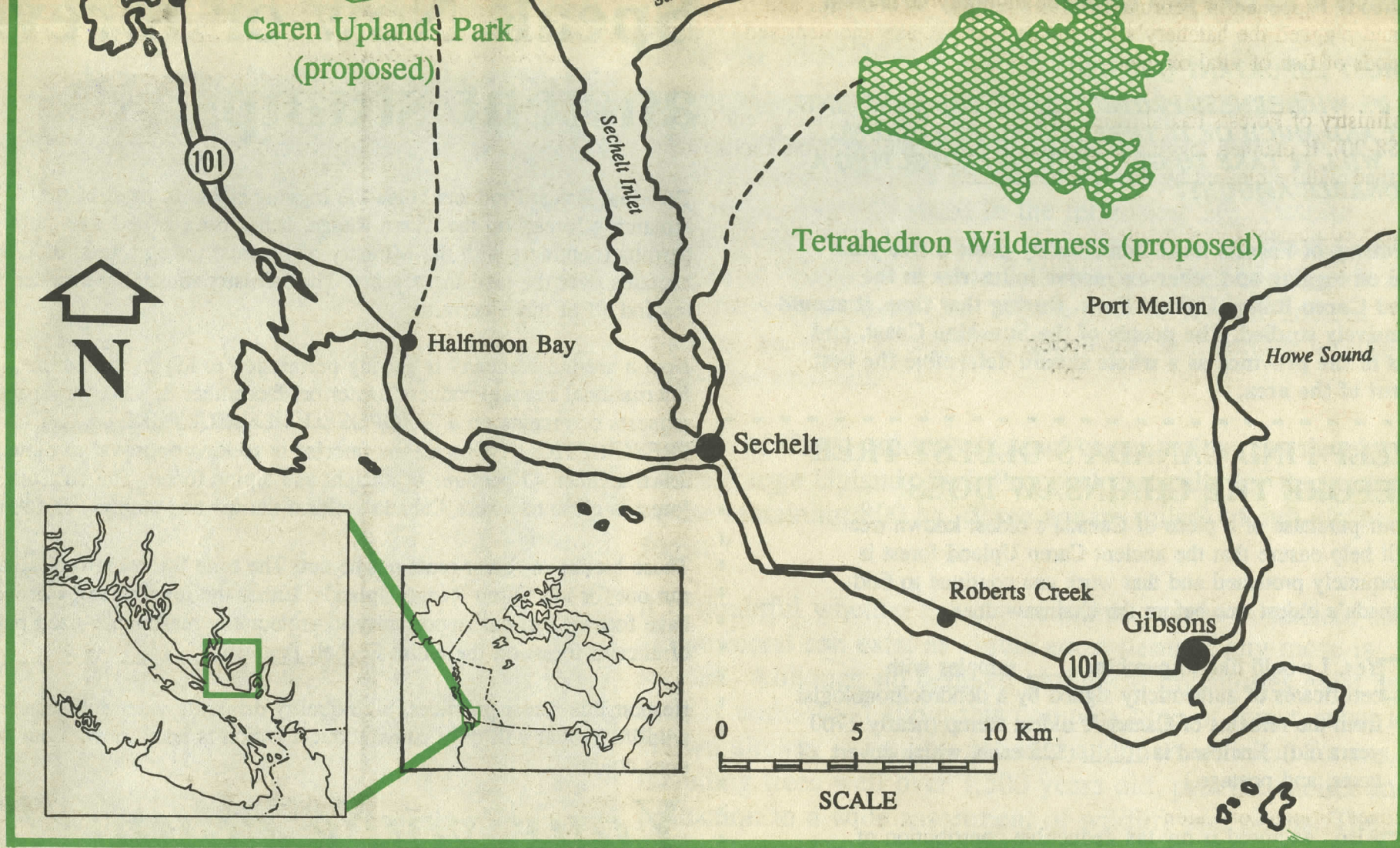
1,513-year-old yellow cedar left as waste wood in Caren Range Uplands.

Randy Stoltmann

# ss protected ne Coast!

Sunshine Coast, B.C., Canada





# When you log a wild forest...

After a forest is logged and its soil disturbed, it is usually replanted, thinned, sometimes fertilized, sprayed with herbicides and eventually logged again. After the whole process is repeated one or two more times, the forest ecosystem loses its potential to ever support the vast genetic diversity of life it once housed. The natural forest, in a sense, degenerates into a managed forest. Unless adequate sized remnants of our natural ecosystems are protected, these wild areas will become extinct.



Debbie Robertson



Debbie Robertson

## TOUGH QUESTIONS AND HONEST ANSWERS

**Q.**  
*Is the Caren not part of the working forest? Protectionists like you are costing industry valuable land which will mean lost jobs and forest workers being laid off.*

**A.**  
The Ministry of Forests admits that its own watershed guidelines have been exceeded and that the District has been overcut by 30%. The issue is not whether to log the few remaining wild areas or lose jobs. The real question is, do we want to have any wild places left, and a local forest industry that is committed to the long term health and employment opportunities of this area, or more of the same?

**Q.**  
*Why do you need to protect the Caren when similar values are already found in Garibaldi and Cypress Bowl Provincial Parks?*

**A.**  
Are these forests the same? Sechelt Peninsula is an island, ecologically speaking. Forests of the Caren Range are older than those in Garibaldi and Cypress Bowl. They also offer to the growing population on the Sunshine Coast the opportunity of excellent upland recreation as an extension of the North Shore parks system.

**Q.**  
*When will we see enough area protected on the Sunshine Coast? Different groups want different areas... first the Tetrahedron, now the Caren. Will it ever stop?*

**A.**  
Yes, there is a limit to areas needing protection but it has not been reached yet. There are no sizeable areas of protected wilderness on the Sunshine Coast. The Tetrahedron and Caren proposals are steps towards correcting this gross imbalance.

**Q.**  
*Why not "multiple-use" on the Sunshine Coast?*

**A.**  
True "multiple use" ensures the protection of adequate amounts of ancient forest at all elevations and forest types as benchmarks and genetic reservoirs. It is not known if logged over lands will ever recover to the same level of genetic diversity as ancient

## Dear Mr. Mountain...

*A year of volunteer effort: 12,400 coho died when flood-born silt blocked water pipes at Pender Harbour Salmon Enhancement hatchery.*

Madiera Park, B.C.  
VON 2H0  
November 21 1991

Mr. Barry Mountain  
District Manager  
Sunshine Coast Forest District  
1077 Duncan Street  
Powell River, B.C.  
V8A 1W1

Dear Mr. Mountain,

I am a young resident of the Pender Harbour area and I have lived here for 6 years. It was just last spring that I became aware that possibly the oldest trees in Canada are practically in my backyard, and that they are rapidly dwindling as a result of clearcut logging in the area. I am shocked and considerably angry to know that you in Forestry are letting this go on. Not only is the oldest recorded tree in Canada up in the Caren Range, but the old growth forest is an important symbol of our heritage and should be left for future generations to enjoy. Also, extensive clearcutting in cutblocks around block 20-1 has led to siltation and flooding of a local creek which flows out of the area. It had snowed on the mountain, and when it rained there was a huge melt which wouldn't have happened had there been forest instead of clearcut. The siltation wrecked havoc at our local hatchery. Nearly half of the young coho in the hatchery that were left over from the February catastrophe were killed. I hope that for these reasons you will listen to me and others in our plea for the preservation of the Caren Range old growth forest.

Sincerely

*Jordan Field*  
Jordan Field

P.S. Just in case you didn't already know, the flooding took place on Nov. 19.



John Field

ever recover to the same level of genetic diversity as ancient forests.

### THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION

**WITH 0% WILDERNESS PROTECTED ON THE SUNSHINE COAST AND MUCH OF IT THREATENED BY LOGGING, WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO GET ON WITH PROTECTING A REASONABLE AMOUNT?**

A.

The Ministry of Forests must immediately place a five year deferral on logging and other extractive industries in the proposed Caren Range Upland Park. During that time, it should be extensively studied. The people of the Sunshine Coast, and perhaps of the province as a whole should determine the best treatment of the area.

### HELP FIND CANADA'S OLDEST TREE BEFORE THE CHAINSAW DOES!

Your purchase of a piece of Canada's oldest known tree will help ensure that the ancient Caren Upland forest is adequately protected and that work can continue to find Canada's oldest tree before the chainsaw does.

Yes, I would like to purchase \_\_\_\_\_ samples with certificates of authenticity signed by a dendrochronologist from the remains of Canada's oldest stump (nearly 1700 years old). Enclosed is \_\_\_\_\_ (\$25 each, which covers all taxes, and postage.)

Also, enclosed is my tax deductible contribution of \_\_\_\_\_ to help ensure the protection of the Caren Range Uplands. Rev. Canada Tax Registration #0587113-21-28

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to Western Canada Wilderness Committee,  
20 Water St., Vancouver, B.C., V6B 1A4



# Speak Now or forever ancient stumps.

Terminal Forest Products holds the logging rights to most of the remaining forests on the Caren Range. It has been issued five cutting permits (contracts with the Ministry of Forests) to log a total of 120 hectares over the next three years. The Ministry must be persuaded to rescind all of these permits.

Now a second company is getting permission to log in the Caren. International Forest Products' (Interfor) December 3, 1991 newspaper ad requests comments on a "PROPOSED SILVICULTURE PRESCRIPTION". This means Interfor is seeking approval to mow down another 45 hectares of ancient sub-alpine forest. The targeted forest is close to where Canada's oldest known tree stump was found.

These blocks of forest must not be cut. The time for compromise has run out for the Caren Range Uplands. Either the logging stops or we have forever lost our opportunity to protect any reasonable sized patches of ancient forest on the entire Sechelt Peninsula.

Responsible forest practices, high quality drinking water and secure wildlife habitat will only come about if action is taken now. Your voice does count!

## Your voice counts!

Write to:

Hon. Dan Miller,  
Minister of Forests,  
Parliament Buildings,  
Victoria, B.C.  
V8V 1X4

At the above address send copies to:  
Hon John Cashore, Minister of Environment,  
Lands and Parks  
Gordon Wilson, Leader of the Opposition  
Judy Tyabji, MLA, Environment Critic



Save Canada's Oldest Forest

Join and actively support:  
Friends of Caren  
Box 272  
Madeira Park, B.C.,  
V0N 2H0