

Cathedral Grove 'Park' expansion - a pre-election coup attempt

Posted by

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After some running up and down of stairs to get official permission, I (as a representative from Victoria Street Newz), I was finally allowed into the press gallery to hear the exciting news about the Cathedral Grove park expansion. (I refuse to call it MacMillan Park). Actually, Ingmar Lee had much better luck getting in than I, even though we both carried our Street Newz Media Cards. It's so much fun being a woman.

This parks plan has been in the works for a long time, they said, Gillian has been thinking about this for a long time, it's a unique opportunity for us all ?

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Gillian Trumper ? MLA Port Alberni, John Holmes ? Weyerhaeuser, Doug Walker ? Nature Trust , and Bill Barisoff ? Minister of Stump Parks, were on hand today at the Legislature to promote, celebrate, pat themselves on the back, over a ?project with international and national significance,? suggesting that Weyerhaeuser deserves a great deal of credit for this generous donation of land.

Luckily Ingmar Lee was there to remind us about Weyerhaeuser?s clearcutting practices in our ancient forests, many of which contain Culturally Modified Trees ? a vital legacy for First Nations, and an anthropological treasure it?s illegal to destroy. John Holmes said ?we have not cut down CMT?s ? without authorization." Ingmar also asked why they?re giving us a stump field when there?s a bunch of old growth forest that?s not being protected right next to the new park boundaries.

A different media representative (unfortunately I didn?t catch his name) also asked pointed questions, from which we learned that Weyerhaeuser is now eligible for a three million dollar tax credit from the federal government, because of their ecologically sensitive gift. They will also likely attain a ?cash component? of giving 2 million from the BC Government. The land they?re ?giving? us is valued at 5.5 million dollars. Isn?t corporate capitalism

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convenient?!?

Even Syd Haskell was able to extract some vital information. Will there be a public process, like we had with Carmanah when the Socreds were in power, to decide what to do with the park?" Blah, Blah, Blah, was the response.

I tried, three times, to ask what the name of the park will be, but I was ignored. I'm just a girl.

For more information about CMTs, check out "Sacred Cedar: The Cultural and Archaeological Significance of Culturally Modified Trees," Arnoud Stryd and Vicki Feddema? - www.dauidsuzuki.org/Forests/Publications.asp, and look forward to the next issue of Street Newz!

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Janine Bandcroft