

**NOTICE OF MOTION TO CAPITAL REGIONAL DISTRICT BOARD
MEETING OF JUNE 9, 2021**

SUBJECT **Partnerships to Protect Old Growth Forests in a Manner Consistent with Reconciliation**

ISSUE

This report provides a recommendation that the Capital Regional District endorse the position of member local governments calling on the Government of British Columbia to protect old growth forests in a manner consistent with reconciliation objectives, and indicate the CRD's willingness to partner with Indigenous and non-Indigenous governments in pursuit of these objectives.

BACKGROUND

Local governments including the District of Highlands, District of Metchosin, District of Saanich, City of Victoria, City of Nanaimo, District of Tofino, City of Powell River and City of Port Moody have joined the chorus of voices calling for protection of remaining stands of high-productivity old-growth forests on Vancouver Island in a manner consistent with reconciliation objectives.

Local governments in the Capital Region have consistently advocated for protection of old-growth rainforests through the immediate and just transition to sustainable management of second-growth forests, improving outcomes including biological diversity, water quality, sustainable employment and community resilience.

Controversy surrounding proposed logging in areas including the upper headwaters of Fairy Creek – the last unlogged watershed in the San Juan River system in the Capital Region – demonstrates the need for action on recommendations in the Provincial government's Old Growth Strategic Review.

It is therefore recommended that the Capital Regional District Board endorse the following resolution and support potential partnerships to protect at-risk old-growth forests on southern Vancouver Island in a manner consistent with reconciliation objectives.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board endorses the following resolution and directs staff to forward copies to the Premier of British Columbia, the BC Minister of Forests, the BC Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, Members of the Legislative Assembly representing constituencies on Vancouver Island, and Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) member local governments, requesting favourable consideration:

Resolution: Partnerships to Protect Old Growth Forests in a Manner Consistent with Reconciliation

WHEREAS the District of Highlands, District of Metchosin, District of Saanich and City of Victoria have gone on record calling for the Government of British Columbia to protect old growth forests in a manner consistent with the objective of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples;

AND WHEREAS Ancient high productivity old-growth ecosystems are globally one of the most valuable climate mitigation and resiliency assets in terms of carbon storage, sequestration, protection against wildfire, storage of water and preservation of biological diversity;

AND WHEREAS Less than 3% of the original high productivity old growth forests in British Columbia remain standing, and of this residual land base, 75% is slated to be eliminated through industrial logging operations;

AND WHEREAS the Government of British Columbia's Old Growth Review Panel recommended in April 2020 that the Province defer development of old growth forests where "ecosystems are at very high and near-term risk of irreversible biodiversity loss" until a new strategy is implemented;

AND WHEREAS Alternatives exist to increase protection of biological diversity and employment, through the immediate and just transition to sustainable management of second-growth forests with expanded value-added processing and manufacturing;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Capital Regional District endorses the position of the District of Highlands, District of Metchosin, District of Saanich and City of Victoria calling on the Government of British Columbia to protect old growth forests on Vancouver Island in a manner consistent with reconciliation objectives;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Capital Regional District expresses its willingness to work with Indigenous governments, the Government of British Columbia, the Government of Canada and other entities to protect old growth forests on southern Vancouver Island in a manner consistent with reconciliation objectives, including consideration of establishing Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Capital Regional District calls on the Government of British Columbia to work with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities to implement recommendations of the Old Growth Strategic Review and defer old-growth logging pending implementation of the panel's recommendations;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Capital Regional District calls on the Government of British Columbia to allocate funding to enact deferrals in an economically just manner, in the full spirit of reconciliation, and to support through conservation financing and other measures the economic transition of affected Indigenous and non-Indigenous workers, communities and companies from unsustainable old-growth logging toward the development of long-term sustainable local economies.

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| Submitted by: | Director Ben Isitt, Victoria |
| | Director Gary Holman, Salt Spring Island |
| | Director Ned Taylor, Saanich |
| | Director Dave Howe, Southern Gulf Islands |
| | Direct Ken Williams, Highlands |
| | Alternate Director Nathalie Chambers, Saanich |

Attachments:

1. *A New Future for Old Forests: Old Growth Strategic Review* (2020)
2. Statement from Pacheedaht First Nation (April 2021)
3. Letter from Elder Bill Jones, Pacheedaht First Nation (2020)
4. Letter from the District of Highlands (April 2021)
5. Resolution adopted by the District of Metchosin (April 2021)
6. Resolution adopted by the District of Saanich (April 2021)
7. Letter from the City of Victoria (April 2021)
8. Letter from the City of Nanaimo (March 2021)
9. Letter from the District of Tofino (April 2021)
10. Letter from the City of Powell River (March 2021)
11. Resolution adopted by the City of Port Moody (March 2021)