

# **United We Stand for Old Growth Forests!**

## ***Declaration, March and Super-Rally***

### ***Saturday February 25, BC Legislature***

September 2022 marked the 2nd anniversary of the British Columbia government's release of the report of its Old-Growth Strategic Review (OGSR) panel, "A New Future for Old Forests". The report recommended **immediate action to stop logging of the most at-risk old growth forests in BC**. It called for a major shift in BC forestry practices, namely to "Declare conservation of ecosystem health and biodiversity of British Columbia's forests as an overarching priority and enact legislation that legally establishes this priority for all sectors." It called for the full involvement of First Nations communities, the inherent rights and title holders of this land. It called for public reporting that is "vetted, trustworthy, accurate and shared," and included a three-year framework.

In light of overwhelming support for old growth forest protection, the Horgan government made clear [2020 election promises](#) to implement all 14 recommendations of the OGSR report. However, more than two years later, the NDP's response has been poor. Our main critiques are as follows:

- Without on-the-ground measures, the talk-and-log status quo continues, and thousands of hectares of at-risk forests continue to be logged across the province. More than three million hectares of at-risk forest remain vulnerable to logging, and ancient giants are felled daily.
- The government earned a record \$1.8 billion in stumpage fees in 2021, but has not provided sufficient funding to First Nations to support immediate deferrals, long term solutions, and their transition to sustainable second growth forestry.
- Despite only one year remaining on the OGSR framework, the government has not established an implementation plan with clear measurable objectives, timelines, accountability, and steps for well-resourced enforcement and evaluation. Limited reports to the public continue to be variable, biased, often inaccurate.
- While we are in a **Code Red** global climate crisis, this is a dangerous failure. Healthy forests are essential to maintaining safe, sustainable communities, critical water ecosystems, biodiversity, salmon habitat and so much more. With more extreme weather, wildfires and flooding, the failure to protect vital forest ecosystems is already life-threatening and has decimated some communities in B.C.
- Since the release of the OGSR, well over 1100 people have been arrested, while peacefully defending old-growth forests in multiple parts of B.C., demonstrating the widespread frustration with the NDP government and its failure to keep its promises on this vital issue.

Urgently needed is a just transition for First Nations and forest-dependent communities that protects these carbon-rich ancient forests and their critical role in ensuring a livable future for all.

**Today, and every day, we, the undersigned, stand together in an unprecedented show of unity** amongst working people, Indigenous land stewards and knowledge-keepers, activists, scientists, youth, educators, communities, celebrities, environmental and social justice groups, faith organizations and more. Standing united against the destruction of old growth forests. Standing strong for future generations.

**Our coalition is bringing a broad-based mass mobilization to the BC Legislature on February 25th, 2023** that reflects the majority of public will in BC for progressive solutions to the crisis in the woods. Based on the Union of BC Indian Chiefs Resolution 2022-32, and supported by independent reporting, the scientific data on old growth, and the urgency of the climate crisis, we demand that the BC NDP government:

- **Immediately halt logging in at-risk old growth forests** and additional areas suggested by First Nations
- Provide **fulsome and immediate financial support for First Nations** to implement logging deferrals and resilience planning on their unceded territories, including
- Indigenous conservation strategies and compensation for any lost revenues and employment as a result of deferrals
- Pursue **full protection as the goal for all deferral areas**, and invest to make protection the best economic option
- Fulfill its election promise to **implement all 14 recommendations** of the OGSR panel by September 2023, within the 3-year timeline which government promised, including biodiversity legislation for all sectors, and provide regular progress reports
- Urgently move toward the paradigm shift and resilience planning outlined in the OGSR recommendations, **prioritizing ecosystem integrity and biodiversity** as the highest priority of forest management and as essential in the climate crisis
- Implement **a just transition for all communities** while moving toward a sustainable, second-growth forest industry
- Provide: regular and detailed updates on deferrals and long-term solutions to safeguard and restore at-risk old growth; communications on all forest stewardship related decision making; and reports on timelines and progress to ensure **transparency and accountability for all OGSR recommendations**
- Ensure forestry related decisions are fully compliant with **free, prior, and informed consent and uphold the Title and Rights of First Nations** pursuant to the government's responsibilities under the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Acknowledge the role of intact forests and sustainable forest practices in both limiting and mitigating climate change, and incorporate **increased conservation targets into the CleanBC climate plan**

**All Out! Saturday February 25**

## **DECLARATION SIGNATORIES (227 Organizations)**

### **Initial Signatories**

**Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC)  
Elders for Ancient Trees  
Sierra Club BC  
Wilderness Committee  
Stand.earth**

### **Additional signatories to date**

**The AbbeyChurch / The Emmaus Community  
Alberni Valley Transition Town Society  
Anglican Diocese of Islands and Inlets  
Anglican Diocese of Kootenay  
Anglican Diocese of New Westminster  
Awi'nakola Tree of Life Foundation (Kwakwaka'wakw Nation)  
Alberta Regional Chapter of CAPE, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment  
Arrowsmith Naturalists  
Avalon:Secrets of Aquaculture  
BC Chapter of CAPE, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment  
BC Chapter of CANE, Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment  
British Columbia Coalition Institute  
BC Environmental Network  
BC General Employees Union (BCGEU)  
BC Great Blue Heron Society  
BC Nature (Federation of BC Naturalists)  
BC Poverty Reduction Coalition  
BC Teachers' Federation - Committee for Action on Social Justice  
BC-Yukon KAIROS  
Be the Change Earth Alliance  
Being Held Institute Ltd.  
Bluewater Adventures  
Campbell River Whale Watching and Adventure Tours Ltd.  
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society -- BC  
Canadian Research Institute for Advancement of Women  
Canopy  
Capital Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Victoria  
Center for the Promotion of Global Health  
Centre for Spiritual Living, Nanaimo  
Chase Environmental Action Society  
Chemainus Climate Solutions  
Chemainus Residents Association  
Citizens' Environment Network in Colwood (CENIC)  
Clayoquot Action  
Climate Caucus, a non-partisan network of 500+ locally elected leaders working on climate change, biodiversity, and social Justice across Canada  
Climate Convergence Metro Vancouver  
Climate Emergency Institute  
Climate Justice Victoria  
Communities Protecting Our Coast**

**Community Trees Matter Network**  
**Conservation North**  
**Council of Canadians, Campbell River Chapter**  
**Council of Canadians, Duncan Chapter**  
**Council of Canadians, Mid-Island Chapter**  
**Council of Canadians, Nelson/West Kootenay Chapter**  
**Council of Canadians, Powell River Chapter**  
**Council of Canadians, Terrace Chapter**  
**Council of Canadians, Victoria Chapter**  
**Cowichan Climate Hub**  
**Cowichan Valley Naturalists**  
**Creatively United for the Planet Society**  
**David Suzuki Foundation**  
**Denman Island Climate Action Network (DICAN)**  
**Denman Islanders for Climate Action and Social Justice**  
**Dignity Facilitation**  
**Discovery Islands Forest Conservation Project**  
**Doctors for Planetary Health - West Coast**  
**Dogwood**  
**Douglas College Faculty Association Climate Emergency Action Committee**  
**Duncan United Church**  
**Ecoforestry Institute Society**  
**Ecojustice**  
**Elphinstone Logging Focus**  
**Environmental Educators Provincial Specialist Association (EEPSA)**  
**Esquimalt Climate Organizers (ECO)**  
**Esquimalt United Church Justice Team**  
**Evergreen Alliance**  
**Extinction Rebellion Nanaimo**  
**Fairfield United Church**  
**Farewell Island Lodge**  
**First Metropolitan United Church**  
**First Things First Okanagan**  
**For Our Kids, Burnaby**  
**For Our Kids, Sunshine Coast**  
**For Our Kids, Vancouver**  
**FORPA: Forest Protection Allies**  
**Fraser Headwaters Alliance**  
**Freedom from War Coalition**  
**Fridays for Future Vancouver**  
**Friends of Carmanah-Walbran**  
**Friends of Clayoquot Sound**  
**Friends of Cortes Island**  
**Friends of Hyacinthe Creek**  
**The Fur-Bearers**  
**Galiano Conservancy Association**  
**Garry Oak Meadow Preservation Society (GOMPS)**  
**General Delivery Date Corporation**  
**Georgia Strait Alliance**  
**Great Bear Lodge**  
**Greater Victoria Acting Together (GVAT)**

Greater Victoria Climate Hub  
Greater Victoria Teachers Association (GVTA)  
Green Up, Oasis United Church  
Greenheart Education  
Greenpeace Canada  
Hancock Wildlife Foundation  
Halfmoon Bay Environmental Society  
Holy Cross Anglican Church (Vancouver)  
Human and Nature Youth Club  
iD2 Communications Inc.  
Inclusive Christians at UVic  
Island Forest Futures  
Journeying Beyond  
Julius Csotonyi's Paleoart and Scientific Illustration  
Juan de Fuca Forest Watchers  
Kingfisher Wilderness Adventures  
Koksilah Watershed Working Group  
Lasqueti Island Climate Change Action Group  
Last Stand West Kootenays  
Leadnow  
Lillooet Naturalist Society  
Living Language Institute Foundation  
Mamas Movement  
Maple Leaf Adventures  
Metchosin Climate Action Team  
Mothership Adventures Inc.  
Mt. Willet Wilderness Forever  
Mount Work Coalition  
Music Declares Emergency Canada  
Nanaimo Climate Action Hub  
Nanaimo GreenFaith Circle  
NADPH, Nurses and Doctors for Planetary Health  
Nature Salt Spring  
Nature Vancouver  
Nemesis  
Nonviolence International Canada  
North Island Marine Mammal Stewardship Association (NIMMSA)  
Ocean Friendly Port Alberni  
Okanagan Sustainability Leadership Council  
Old Growth Options Group  
Old Growth Revylution  
One Cowichan  
Or Shalom Synagogue  
Osoyoos Desert Society  
Our Lady of Guadalupe Tonantzin Community Society  
Outer Shores Expeditions  
Paddlers Inn (Broughton)  
Palmer Ironworks  
Parents 4 Climate  
Pathways to Leadership with Racialized, Immigrant and Refugee Women's Society  
Peachland Watershed Protection Alliance

**Pender Harbour Wildlife Society**  
**Pender Ocean Defenders**  
**Pinto Management Consultancy**  
**Polster Environmental Service**  
**Programs in Earth Literacies**  
**Protect Our Winters Canada**  
**Protect the Planet Stop TMX**  
**Protectors of the Salish Sea**  
**Public Service Alliance of Canada, BC Region**  
**qathet Climate Alliance**  
**qathet Old Growth**  
**Rainforest Flying Squad**  
**RAVEN: Respecting Aboriginal Values and Environmental Needs**  
**Red Cedar Community Association**  
**Refocus Consulting**  
**River Voices Productions**  
**Rolling Justice Bus**  
**Saanich Eco Advocates**  
**Salish Sea Environmental Educator's PSA Chapter**  
**Salt Spring United Church**  
**Save Old Growth**  
**Shuswap Climate Action Society**  
**Shuswap Environmental Action Society**  
**Shawnigan Basin Society**  
**Silva Forest Foundation**  
**Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition**  
**Social Environmental Alliance (SEA)**  
**Socially Responsible Investing Cowichan**  
**Socialist Alternative Canada**  
**Socialist Alternative Youth UVic**  
**SOFT-CV (Save Our Forests Team - Comox Valley)**  
**South Island Climate Action Network**  
**Spirit of the West Adventures**  
**Spuzzum First Nation**  
**St. Saviour's Anglican Church, Nelson**  
**Sunshine Coast Conservation Association**  
**Surrey for Future**  
**Sustainable Environment Network Society**  
**Total Representation Society**  
**Thriving Roots Preschool**  
**Transition Kamloops**  
**Transition Salt Spring Society**  
**Transition Sooke**  
**Tree of Life Nature Preschool**  
**Valhalla Wilderness Society**  
**Vancouver Island Peace Council**  
**Vancouver Island Photo Tours**  
**Vancouver Island Water Watch Coalition**  
**Vancouver Unitarian Environment Team**  
**Victoria Climate Action Team**  
**Victoria Natural History Society**

**Victoria Peace Coalition**  
**VIDEA**  
**Watershed Sentinel Educational Society**  
**Wednesday Vigil for Ancient Forests**  
**Wednesday Wonderers Hiking Group**  
**West Coast Environmental Law**  
**West Kootenay Climate Hub**  
**Where Do We Stand, North Cowichan**  
**Whistler Naturalists**  
**Wildcoast Adventures Ltd.**  
**Wildcraft Forest Foundation**  
**Wildsight**  
**Wildsight Invermere**  
**Workers Solidarity Network**  
**Yellow Point Ecological Society**  
**Zero Waste BC**  
**350 Canada**  
**350 Vancouver**