

John Money critique on Webinar #3 – Tree Protection

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Subject: Tree/ Forest webinar - by john money

Posting for John Money:

I enjoyed Tuesday night's webinar and found the speakers very interesting as well as professional. I thought I would put in writing what I took from the presentations.

David Dennison did an excellent job explaining the information used by staff when presenting Forestry and species at risk in the gulf islands to Trust Council. He carefully laid out how the information was misinterpreted, misleading and at the best very selective, creating a misleading alarmist report to Trust Council when there was, really, no species at risk.

Mary Beth's going back through Council meetings finding that the only forestry presentations to Council have been by Planning Staff using misleading information. The only other presentations were from Raincoast Conservancy, who have a single purpose agenda to stop forest management and harvest or even the cutting of trees. Wording all through the Draft Policy Statement is word for word out of Raincoast Conservancy's presentations.

There has never been a presentation to Council from a professional forester, private forest management association owners or association professionals, arborist or tree cutters.

Mary Beth also pointed out that permitting tree cutting was at best inefficient, expensive and really would not achieve the Trust's goal to stop tree cutting only. It would be more expensive to the tax payer as well as the home builder....so much for affordable housing!

Megan Hanacek, CEO of Private Forest Landowners Association made an excellent presentation that private forest land management should be promoted by the Islands Trust.

David Haley, retired forester, pointed out that tree cutting permits would not work and the Trust had some good tools already to promote sustainable forestry, sustainable harvesting while protecting any species at risk. He mentioned Natural Area Protection tax break incentives for one and a Good Forest Practices Code.

When I was a Trustee at Trust Council, I was one of the Trustees to help champion this incentive. I worked with Trustee Kim Benson from Keats Island who spent hours and

hours on the initiative.

I pushed and pushed the Trust to solicit the help of professionals and create a Good Forest Practices Code that could be used by Local Trust Committees and promote local community woodlots and registered private land forest management.

By and large I was stonewalled; the only practice they wanted to consider was No Forestry. The outcome, of course, is to cause panic harvesting by land owners. I would predict if tree cutting permits continue to go through, there will be another wave of panic harvesting and tree cutting.

The aerial photo's time lapse were interesting, on average forest cover has increased in most islands, if not all.

In the 1940's, 50's and 60's the gulf islands were logged hard; every bay had a log dump. Time lapse pictures from 1945 until now demonstrates the wonderful regenerative qualities of the gulf islands.

I have lived in the gulf islands since late winter 1945 and have been involved in forestry and watched the forest all my life.

I have worked with European Foresters, old time loggers, and indigenous people who have hunted, fished and worked in the forest all their lives.

I have tracts of forest land still that I selectively harvest regularly and watched the increased accelerated regeneration of a properly managed forest, not to mention the other flora and fauna that thrive in a healthy forest.

The Islands Trust's short sighted, misleading information and inexperienced, single minded ideas have no place in the forests of the gulf islands and I can see them creating irreparable harm in the islands.

John Money, Saturna Island

Former Islands Trustee 21 years, Executive committee 6 years