

2017-07-26

Mr Enrique Sanchez, RFP Planning Forester
BC Timber Sales, Chinook Area
46360 Airport Road
Chilliwack B.C. V2P 1A5

Public Comment: Re BCTS Chinook Proposed Timber Sales on Bowen Island per FSP 643

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed timber sales from the approximately 1,400 ha of Crown Land under consideration for logging on Bowen Island.

I am particularly concerned of the potentially adverse hydrologic impacts that some or all of this logging, and its associated access road, landing/sort pad building/maintenance, may cause. The island is rainfall dependant, as there is no appreciable snow pack to moderate water supply (highest point Mt Gardner, 719m asl). Hydrologic impacts are unknowable for the critical, low flow period July-August-September, as there appears to be little data, at this time, on the hydrology of the local, permanent and ephemeral streams. I'm not sure how potential climate change may change the norm for these creeks. The potential impact on evapotranspiration from forest canopy removal and the timing of water release from impacted soils is hard, if not impossible to reliably predict, based on reconnaissance level, soil mapping and TRIM topographic mapping available for these areas. My concern is the low flow periods may be lower, for longer even without the added, unknown risk of the impacts of industrial logging.

Many of the streams in the affected watersheds are cut-throat trout and/or coho salmon-bearing. Many of the watersheds impacted by the proposed 5 blocks of timber supply are also home to the surface water (and groundwater) supplies that islanders depend on year-round for primarily domestic and, to a lesser extent, commercial use. The low flow period is of critical importance to the sustenance of the aquatic organisms and the community at large that depend on these flows.

Recognizing that Islanders are consumers of wood in both construction and as a heating fuel, could you please provide information on the type of logging that is being considered in this hydrologically sensitive, island environment. Local (South Coast- Gulf Island) examples of selective logging, which successfully maintain the integrity of the forest canopy and the utility of the forest as a modifier of the micro-climate, water quality and quantity, would be useful to the discussion of the proposed land use. Perhaps the (maximum?) annual timber yield of 8,288 m³ would be drastically reduced if potentially adverse, hydrologic impacts are to be avoided (not mitigated).

There are many other issues worthy of consideration regarding this logging proposal. I have focussed on one.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Regards,

D.K. McQueen