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From: Edward_Wachtman <--->
Sent: Wednesday, July 19, 2017 9:24 AM
To: jordan.sturdy.mla@leg.bc.ca
Cc: Mayor Council
Subject: BOWEN ISLAND: NO INDUSTRIAL LOGGING

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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The Honourable Jordan Sturdy, MLA

Approaching Vancouver by air—the lush and pristine splendour of Bowen Island—sitting amidst the sparkling waters of Howe Sound—is a welcoming and living testimonial to “Supernatural British Columbia”. It is a striking visual image of British Columbia’s very positive and compelling multi-billion dollar message to the world.

The paragraph above is one of many reasons I am greatly concerned about the recent and shocking interest of the British Columbia Timber Sales (BCTS) with the Crown Lands on Bowen Island.

Potentially 28% of Bowen Island could be industrially logged. This is an area roughly the size of three and half Stanley Parks. Even logging a significantly smaller percentage would be a devastating loss at many levels.

Provincially, imagine the damage to the “Supernatural British Columbia” brand if tourists were confronted with huge swaths of timber cuts so close to the world-class city of Vancouver. What negative impact would this have on a billion dollar brand?

Regionally, Bowen Island is—according to an exit survey conducted by Bowen’s Economic Development Committee as part of the island’s recent branding initiative—a very accessible ‘get-away’, a ‘calming haven’, an ‘oasis’ where residents of the lower mainland can escape the hustle and bustle of urban life. Visitors tell us that Bowen’s natural beauty, its peaceful quiet helps them relax and recharge; allowing them to connect—or reconnect—with matters most in their lives.

Locally, logging would pose a major disruption to Bowen Island; a small community of 3600. Bowen Islanders rely on Crown Land watersheds for clean, potable water. Many residential properties directly abut Crown Lands that may be subject to the timber cut. Bowen’s local economy is heavily reliant on tourism, which most certainly would be negatively affected by industrial logging on the island. The branding exit survey cited above showed that 76% of visitors engaged in hiking while they were here. Hiking in a clear cut is not terribly tantalizing.

The Islands Trust acknowledges that islands are delicate and unique eco-systems; they need to be treated with great care. This is one reason the Islands' Trust was created. It's mandate:

“To preserve and protect the trust area and its unique amenities and environment for the benefit of residents of the trust area and of the province generally, in cooperation with municipalities, regional districts, improvement districts, other persons and organizations and the Government of British Columbia.”

Given the potential risk versus the benefits for re-introducing industrial logging on Bowen Island, the risks far outweigh the benefits

Finally—and just as importantly—the ‘consultation’ process itself is extremely flawed. The truncated timeframe on an issue so vital to the province, the region, and Bowen Island is not acceptable. Meaningful dialogue takes time. It appears the BCTS is doing all that it can to ensure the outcomes of this ‘consultation’ meet its narrowly defined bureaucratic goals and objectives. The larger social, environmental, and economic consequences be damned.

This potential risk vs. benefit of industrial logging on Bowen coupled with a flawed and time constrained ‘consultation process’ leads me to one conclusion. **I will staunchly oppose any industrial logging on Bowen Island.** It makes no sense economically, socially, or environmentally.

Respectfully,

Edward Wachtman