

## Sophie Idsinga

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**From:** Jen Lundin Ritchie <---->  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 12, 2017 1:06 PM  
**To:** Enrique.Sanchez@gov.bc.ca  
**Cc:** Mayor Council  
**Subject:** BCTS logging proposal on Bowen Island

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Mr. Sanchez,

It was with shock and dismay that I heard about BCTS' Proposed Forest Stewardship Plan 643 for Bowen Island. I read the notice in *The Undercurrent*, as well as your letter to Hope Dallas, and attended a municipal council meeting, where Sue Ellen Fast reported on her meeting with you.

I can scarcely believe that anyone would consider logging viable on Bowen Island in this day and age. Sue Ellen Fast was surprised that you didn't "get the message" from your meeting with her, so I am writing to confirm that **Bowen Island residents are STRONGLY OPPOSED to commercial logging on Bowen.**

There are several reasons why the idea of commercial logging on Bowen just doesn't make sense.

### **1. It is counterproductive for island revenue:**

First, Bowen's main industry is tourism. People come to Bowen island not for our non-existent nightlife, but because it is a wilderness playground. They hike, mountainbike, mountain-climb, and ride horses in our forests, and deepsea dive, sail, and kayak around our shores. We host a "destination" half-marathon, the West Coast's biggest kayak race, and one of the coast's largest single-start sailing races. Mt. Gardner hiking is a common day-trip from Vancouver. The trail network there has been recently upgraded and it is already in the process of being declared a recreation area under Sec 56 of the Crown Act.

Tourist season brings thousands of visitors, and an additional 1500 residents (mostly in tourism-based jobs). When the tourists come, the local businesses thrive. Many island businesses are only viable during the tourist season. Who will come to Bowen if Mt Gardner is logged? What kind of nature playground will we look like, from the ferry, or from the tourist hub of Artisan Square, if the lush forest of Mt Collins is stripped bare? How many people are going to want to play golf beside a noisy eyesore of a logging operation?

The amount of money that could be produced from logging these areas in no way off-sets the losses that Bowen would suffer in tourism dollars. Certainly the annual \$1500 revenue in stumpage fees (based on a similar proposal that was recently defeated on Gambier Island) is a laughable compensation. Although logging was common 100 years ago, today we have no local timber companies nor a need for these jobs. We already have zero unemployment: everyone who wants a job can easily get one, and often our job postings sit open for lack of applicants. Many of us are retired.

## **2. It greatly reduces our quality of life:**

Commercial logging goes counter to “who we are” and what we value. I wonder if, because we are often lumped together with West Vancouver, that perhaps you don’t understand who we are here on Bowen Island. A great number of our 3680 residents live on Bowen precisely because of its forests. We are artists and educators. The island voted Green in the last election. We love to be away from the rush of the city, wake up to tree-covered mountains, waves lapping on beaches, and songbirds calling out the day. We love to “get lost” in Fairy Fen, hike up the lesser-known trails of Mt Collins and the Apodaca eco-reserve, and get together in volunteer groups to create community gardens and release salmon into streams.

What kind of quality of life will we have if we have to listen to chainsaws and chippers, 1000 logging trucks per day (calculated from your proposed harvest of 8288 cu metres a year) and/or the equivalent of helicopters? What kind of quality of life will we have, looking at bare mountainsides, no longer suitable for hiking or riding?

We greatly value our natural habitat, and we will fight to protect it. Many people are already planning to lay down in front of machinery, if it comes to that. I sincerely hope things don't have to get that far, which is why I am writing to you now.

## **3. It is harmful to island infrastructure:**

What kind of quality of life will we have fighting with 1000 logging trucks on our already overloaded ferry system? This is more than just adding 1000 more “vehicles” per year, since a logging truck will take the place of several cars. Will BCTS be able to guarantee more sailings? This is more than just a matter of convenience, since many of our residents’ livelihoods depend on the ferry system.

We will need to repair all the local roads affected by the logging. Heavy logging trucks and machinery create a harder toll on asphalt than residential vehicles. Plus, they will be driving the same sections over and over,

further weakening the roads. That costs money. Money that the municipality could otherwise spend on things that the island values.

Hiking trails will be destroyed and in need of repair -- or made moot -- by this logging. Trail systems will be disrupted and need to be rebuilt or rerouted. There has been a recent movement to make our trail system even MORE comprehensive than ever before, so there will be a lot of resistance to these efforts being pushed in the opposite direction.

If heli-logging is used, debris will need to be cleared from our shores. As an island, many of our residents are dependent on boats. Plus, as mentioned above, our tourism industry is in great part boat-dependent. Logging will add deadheads and other hazards to our surrounding oceans and bays. They will also clog up our beaches.

Our resources are better spent on projects that matter to our residents, rather than “cleaning up” the extensive infrastructure damage produced by unwanted logging ventures.

#### **4. It is harmful to the environment:**

I have not even begun to discuss the environmental impacts. These are very disturbing. Our wildlife will be displaced, and the wildlife corridors put in jeopardy. This not only affects the loss of their habitat, but also the loss of their food and water supplies, which will put more wild animals into our residential neighborhoods and onto our roads, where they can create damage and be put in harm’s way.

We also have several rare species of plants and animals that could be destroyed. Some species, like the velvet-leaf blueberry, are so rare in this area that we are the only location it grows among all the Island Trusts. Others, like the medicinally active Agarikon fungus, are now so rare on the planet that it took decades to locate any in their last bastion on earth: here on the Pacific Northwest coast. Yes, Bowen has some! Those are to just mention a couple of the several rare and nearly-extinct species we host here in our forests.

As for the ocean impacts, heli-logging would affect salmon runs, seals and sea lions, and orcas. Last year, Bowen had a record-breaking salmon run, because of our great investments of time and money into salmon enhancement and conservation (an astounding 95% of our fry survive). This includes creating a suitable habitat. Dumping logs into our seashore areas could easily undo those efforts. Furthermore, without salmon to feed on, our resident orcas would suffer. Bowen is also known for its abundance of marine mammals, especially orcas. Besides the disruption in the food chain, the noise and impacts of dropping logs into the water would surely cause these mammals to steer clear.

## 5. It puts our fresh water supply into jeopardy:

One of the biggest hazards of commercial logging is to our water. The water tables will be compromised. The island is already in a precarious position when it comes to potable water. We cannot afford to damage them. Your proposal shows numerous watersheds that will be affected.

I could go on and on, but I hope that I have given you a taste of what is at stake here for us residents, and how vital these forests are to our daily existence. **I think you might be surprised at the level of resistance you will encounter here.**

I hope you will reconsider your plan to implement commercial logging here on Bowen.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lundin Ritchie