

The Vancouver Sun, Saturday, April 07, 2001

War in the woods is over
Forest agenda virtually complete, eco-group exec tells forest convention.
IWA disputes claim
By Gordon Hamilton



Logging protests may be a thing of the past such as this one in 1997 when Nuxalt hereditary chief Ed Moody led a blockade on the Fogg Creek logging site on King Island.

PRINCE GEORGE -- A leading British Columbia environmentalist assured loggers Friday (April 6, 2001) that the eco-movement has virtually finished its forests agenda in this province now that protected areas have been set aside on the central coast.

"I'm going to let you in on a secret that even a lot of the people in my own community may not realize yet: I believe the war in the woods is over," Ric Careless, executive director of B.C. Spaces for Nature, told the Northern Forest Products Association convention.

"In short, there is not another Great Bear Rainforest somewhere out in British Columbia lurking to hit you next. There is not, in my awareness, another Clayoquot Sound out there, and the miners might be glad to know there is not another Tatshenshini."

Careless worked behind the scenes on the recent provincial government announcement to protect 600,000 hectares and defer development on another million hectares on the central B.C. coast.

He said the remaining areas where land-use planning has yet to get under way, the North Coast and the Queen Charlotte Islands, pose few difficulties.

"After 30 years -- and I have been in there from the beginning -- the parks agenda in this province is virtually complete."

However, Careless said issues like the rate of cut in British Columbia and forest practices are going to be an ongoing issue.

"But if we start to take advantage that we have zoned the land for different levels of use, that will help us diminish the tension."

Careless' claim of peace in the woods was disputed by IWA-Canada vice-president Harvey Arcand, who in the past opposed Careless over land-use planning in the Cariboo-Chilcotin. "Maybe I am too long in the tooth, but I have heard that the war in the woods will be over for a long time."

He said there are still too many people wanting too many things from the forest land-base.

"We still have all sorts of loud voices talking one way and another on the same land base, saying lower the AAC, government wants revenues, industry wants profits with or without job creation, and the IWA wants decent-paying, stable jobs."