



Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting of April 1, 2021

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** March 27, 2021
From: Councillor Ben Isitt, Councillor Jeremy Loveday and Councillor Sharmarke Dubow
Subject: Advocacy for Protection of Fairy Creek and Other At-Risk Old-Growth Forests

BACKGROUND

Local governments including the City of Powell River, the City of Port Moody and the City of Nanaimo are joining the chorus of grassroots voices around British Columbia calling for protection of remaining stands of original high productivity (big tree) old-growth forests on Vancouver Island.

The City of Victoria has consistently advocated for protection of old-growth rainforests through the immediate transition to sustainable management of second-growth forests, improving outcomes including biological diversity, water quality, sustainable employment and community resilience.

Current controversy surrounding proposed logging at Fairy Creek – the last unlogged watershed in the San Juan River system in the Capital Regional District – has demonstrated the need for prompt action on recommendations in the Provincial government's Old Growth Strategic Review (2020).

It is therefore recommended that Council endorse the following resolution to lend support for protection of Fairy Creek and other at-risk old-growth forests on Vancouver Island.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council endorse the following resolution and direct staff to forward copies to the Premier of British Columbia, Members of the Legislative Assembly representing constituencies on Vancouver Island, the Capital Regional District Board, municipalities in the Capital Region, and the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities, requesting favourable consideration:

Resolution: Immediate Protection for Fairy Creek and All At-Risk Old-Growth Forests on Vancouver Island

WHEREAS Ancient high productivity old-growth ecosystems are globally one of the most valuable climate mitigation and resiliency assets in terms of carbon storage, sequestration, protection against wildfire, storage of water and preservation of biological diversity;

AND WHEREAS Less than 3% of the original high productivity (big tree) old-growth forests in British Columbia remain standing, and of this residual land base, 75% is slated to be eliminated through industrial logging operations;

AND WHEREAS Alternatives exist to increase protection of biological diversity and employment, through the immediate transition to sustainable management of second-growth forests with expanded value-added processing and manufacturing;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the City of Victoria calls on the Government of British Columbia to immediately defer logging in all high-productivity old-growth forests on Vancouver Island, as recommended by the Old Growth Strategic Review, until all 14 of the panel's recommendations have been implemented, including the Fairy Creek watershed in the Capital Regional District and all other at-risk old-growth forests on Vancouver Island;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the City of Victoria calls on the Government of British Columbia to allocate funding to enact deferrals in an economically just manner, in the full spirit of reconciliation and to support the economic transition of affected First Nations and non-First Nation communities from unsustainable old-growth logging toward the development of long-term sustainable local economies.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Isitt'.

Councillor Isitt

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Loveday'.

Councillor Loveday

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dubow'.

Councillor Dubow

Attachments:

1. *A New Future for Old Forests: Old Growth Strategic Review* (2020)
2. Letter from Elder Bill Jones, Pacheedaht First Nation (2020)