

the former Erickson Improvement District have told us of how they kept their priceless Arrow Creek community watershed protected from logging since 1929 with the creation of the Improvement District.

In concert, the creation of the *Forest Practices Code Act* in 1995 also blatantly ignored the status of B.C.'s Watershed Reserves, and government shamelessly and secretly harmonized the unprotected community and domestic watersheds with the Watershed Reserves into the harvesting land base. From a relatively recent phone call with the head of B.C. Timber Sales, we understand that the B.C. Liberal Administration is intent on logging "every" community watershed, no matter what its designation, no matter what complaints, a profoundly disturbing and contemptuous directive. Since 2001, following the passage of the *Drinking Water Protection Act*, questionable legislations were passed to support this end.

The Minister's announcement and joined comments from the Creston Valley Forest Corporation (daringly declaring themselves 'environmentalists') about the "success" of this community forest license is unfounded. Rather, it symbolizes one of the deepest failures of public trust. These Watershed Reserves were, and are, to be excluded from the forest harvesting land base, and are not meant as forestry experiments and timber to forestry markets at home or abroad. The sophistry and local validations to support the ruination of the formerly protected Arrow Creek is lamentable.


In 2002 we wrote about the draft report that your Ministry tried to bury in 1981 (see: *The Arrow Creek Community Watershed Reserve*, Chapter 10c, January 21, 2002) which recommended against logging in the Arrow Reserve just prior to the initiation of the Arrow Integrated Watershed Management Plan process. On a recent visit in late September 2008 we documented the new roads pushed through highly sensitive, glacial soils which will contaminate, for years to come, the once reputable water quality of Arrow Creek (attached below are photos for your interest). In contrast, other community watersheds that were once protected, and then roaded and logged, are having their troublesome roads deactivated.

The B.C. Community Forest Association (BCCFA) is trying to sway the public to log in community watersheds. Our recent May 2008 report, *The Community Forest Trojan Horse*, critiques the government's attempt to create a community forest license in the Sunshine Coast's primary drinking watersheds in the face of great public resistance. This report was presented to the former Minister of Forests in Sechelt at the annual conference of the BCCFA.

We are all familiar with the refrain by the newly elected United States President Obama, "Time for a Change". That change will and must come to re-protect B.C.'s community and domestic drinking watershed sources, to undo the multiple injustices committed against them. We can no longer afford to ignore these scandals, well documented in our book and elsewhere in reports on our website, all of which have been reviewed and left unaddressed by your administration. Within the Executive Summary of the book are pressing and legitimate demands for a comprehensive public inquiry into the conduct of provincial government administrations and agencies about the provincial Watershed Reserves. Sadly, nothing is yet forthcoming. However difficult, you have a public duty to undo the wrongs that abound.

The trends are clear, and are being implemented as they originated one hundred years ago throughout Canada and the United States. The Metro Vancouver and Greater Victoria drinking watersheds are re-protected, as those of Greater Seattle and Portland, cosmopolitan areas that were used as sleazy precedents by the logging industry and our provincial government to log in smaller cities and townships with protected community watersheds.

Sincerely, Will Koop,



Coordinator, B.C. Tap Water Alliance

CC. Creston Valley Advance
Nelson Daily News
Globe and Mail
Vancouver Sun
Victoria Times Colonist
Bob Simpson, New Democratic Party, Forest and Range Critic
Shane Simpson, New Democratic Party, Environment Critic
B.C. Green Party
Barry Penner, B.C. Minister of Environment
George Abbott, B.C. Minister of Health
Dr. Perry Kendall, B.C. Provincial Health Officer
B.C. Ombudsman
B.C. Forest Practices Board
Regional District of Central Kootenay
The Sunshine Coast Regional District
Union of B.C. Municipalities
North Canyon Improvement District
The City of Creston
Lower Kootenay Indian Band
Slocan Valley Watershed Alliance
Valhalla Wilderness Society
Perry Ridge Water Users
Western Canada Wilderness Committee
David Suzuki Foundation
Council of Canadians
Sierra Club of B.C.
Sunshine Coast Conservation Association
British Columbia Environmental Network
West Coast Environmental Law Association
The Creston Valley Forest Corporation
The B.C. Community Forest Association





Photos (September 23, 2008) of new road in lower southeast corner of the Arrow Creek Watershed Reserve, above the water intake. The road, cut through kilometers of steep, sensitive glacial soil profiles, will continue to ruin the Arrow Creek, the source of water for the famous Kokanee Beer factory in Creston.

Lower right photo: Hay bales, under Best Management Practices, do little to nothing to prevent the fine silts and sediments, shown below and around the culvert and hay bales, from continuing onward to Arrow Creek, located just beyond the area in photo.

