

CITY OF BURNABY

ENVIRONMENT AND WASTE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS

Re: Seymour Demonstration Forest

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council defer responding to a request to support designation of the Seymour Demonstration Forest as a regional park until the GVRD completes an ecological assessment of the area.

REPORT

The Environment and Waste Management Committee, at its meeting held on 1997 November 18, received the attached letter requesting that all GVRD municipalities support the motion recently passed by the District of North Vancouver urging the GVRD to designate the areas between Lynn Canyon Park and Mount Seymour Park, otherwise known as the Seymour Demonstration Forest, as a regional park.

Arising from discussion, the Committee requested that Council defer responding to the request until the GVRD completes an ecological assessment of the subject area.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor L. Rankin
Chair

Councillor D. Johnston
Member

<p>: COPY - CITY MANAGER - DIRECTOR ENGINEERING - DIR. PLNG. & BLDG. - DIR. REC. & CULT. SERV.</p>
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Councillor D. Lawson
Member

The Corporation of
The District of North Vancouver

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District of North Vancouver

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Dennis W. Buck, Municipal Clerk

Telephone 604 990 2211

Fax 984 9637

October 16, 1997

File: 5810-00/00

Ms. Debbie Comis
City of Burnaby
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby, BC
V5G 1M2

Dear Ms. Comis:

Re: Seymour Demonstration Forest

This is to advise that on Tuesday, October 14, 1997 the Council for the District of North Vancouver considered the September 29, 1997 report of Councillor Ernie Crist regarding **Seymour Demonstration Forest**. Council subsequently passed the following resolution:

"THAT

- 1) all GVRD municipalities be requested to support the motion recently passed by the District of North Vancouver asking the GVRD to designate the areas between Lynn Canyon Park and Mount Seymour Park, otherwise known as the Seymour Demonstration Forest, as a regional park by sending a letter of support to the GVRD; and
- 2) a copy of the Executive Summary from a report entitled "Report on the Future of the Seymour Demonstration Forest: dated October 1997 from the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation (SPEC) be forwarded to these same municipalities."

Re: Seymour Demonstration Forest

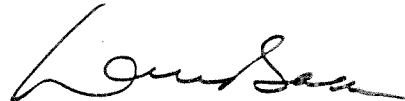
October 16, 1997

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A copy of the relevant report is attached for your information. Also enclosed is a copy of the Executive Summary from the Society Promoting Environmental Conservation report which was received by Council from the Society.

We sincerely hope your Council will endorse this proposal and so advise the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

Yours truly,



Dennis Back
Municipal Clerk

DWB/ljj
Attach.

cc. GVRD Municipalities
GVRD

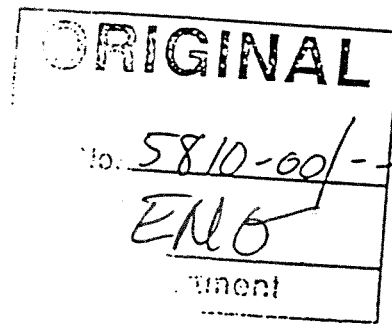
COUNCIL AGENDA/INFORMATION

<input type="checkbox"/> In-Camera	Date: _____	Item # _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular	Date: <u>Oct 14 1997</u>	Item # <u>9</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Info Package	Date: _____	Item # _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agenda Addendum	Date: _____	Item # _____

Dept. Manager	Director	Municipal Manager

The Corporation of the District of North Vancouver
REPORT TO COUNCIL

September 29, 1997
File: 5810-00-00



AUTHOR: Councillor Ernie Crist

SUBJECT: Seymour Demonstration Forest

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT

- 1) all Lower Mainland municipalities be requested to support the motion recently passed by the District of North Vancouver asking the GVRD to designate the areas between Lynn Canyon Park and Mount Seymour Park, otherwise known as the Seymour Demonstration Forest, as a regional park by sending a letter of support to the GVRD.

REASON FOR REPORT:

The Council of the District of North Vancouver recently passed a motion (copy attached), requesting that the Seymour Demonstration Forest in North Vancouver be designated as a regional park and that a letter to that effect be sent to the GVRD.

The Seymour Demonstration Forest already has regional significance for all Lower Mainland residents. This would continue even more so if it were officially designated as a regional park.

The North Shore mountains are becoming ever more important as a regional recreation area. It stands to reason therefore, that all Lower Mainland municipalities should support the efforts of the Council of the District of North Vancouver, and write a corresponding letter to the GVRD. These efforts are also supported by the Western Canada Wilderness Society.

Submitted by:

Councillor Ernie Crist

COUNCIL AGENDA/INFORMATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> In-Camera	Date: _____	Item # _____
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<input type="checkbox"/> Info Package	Date: _____	Item # _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda Addendum	Date: <u>Sept 22/97</u>	Item # <u>A03</u>

Dept. Manager	Director	Municipal Manager
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The Corporation of the District of North Vancouver REPORT TO COUNCIL

September 22, 1997
File: 5810-00-00

COPY

AUTHOR: Councillor Emie Crist

SUBJECT: Change of Designation of Seymour Demonstration Forest Lands into a Regional Park

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Council of the District of North Vancouver urge the GVRD to designate as a regional park the lands located between the Lynn Headwaters Regional Park and Mount Seymour Provincial Park known as the Seymour Demonstration Forest.

REASON FOR REPORT:

Less than one half hour bus ride from downtown Vancouver, grow mammoth trees, 3 to 4 meters in diameter, towering 85 - 90 meters high — taller than 25 storey high buildings and bigger than any left in B.C.

These huge ancient trees are found in an area known by North Shore residents as the Seymour Valley. The lands in this Valley are currently not protected. They are part of an area managed by the Greater Vancouver Water District (GVWD). They are considered "off-catchment" lands — their water flow is not being collected for Greater Vancouver's drinking water. The GVWD says they will never be needed because a lower Seymour dam is not cost-effective.

Since early this century, citizens have clashed over whether the area should be protected or logged. Extensive clear cut logging begun in the 1960s after the GVWD hired forestry consultants to provide advice and the Upper Seymour dam was subsequently built leaving the Lower Seymour lands as "off-catchment" and ripe for logging exploitation.

Ten years ago, the GVWD bowed to forest-industry pressure to have these publicly owned lands managed as a "demonstration forest" rather than a park. There was no public consultation. The previous District Mayor Murray Dykeman, at the request of

SUBJECT: Change of Seymour Demonstration Forest into a Regional Park
September 22, 1997

Page 2

B.C. Forest management representatives, and with the blessing of the District Council of the day, urged the GVRD that the forest be logged.

The area is a place where ordinary people experience healthy, thousand year old trees. A place where the trees, amongst the oldest, largest living beings on earth, are safe from harm for future generations to enjoy. Only if the area is a dedicated regional park can the public rest assured that the eco-system can be rescued from the clutches of its greedy destroyers, such as the forest industry and their political puppets.

Submitted by:

Councillor Emie Crist

xc: Mr. R.J. West-Sells , Director of Parks and Engineering Services

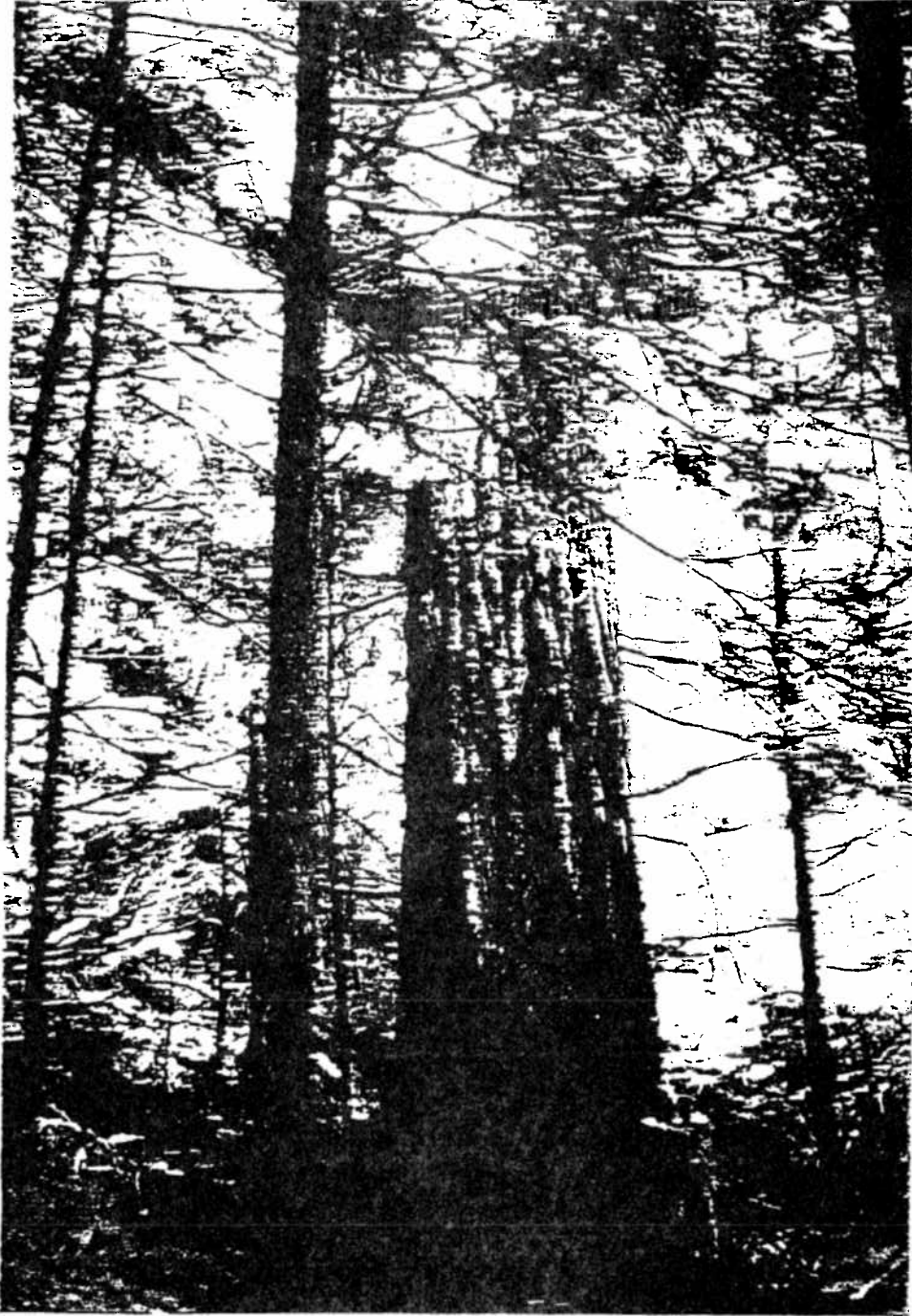
MINUTES of the Regular Meeting of Council for The Corporation of the District of North Vancouver held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, B.C. on Monday, September 22, 1997 commencing at 7:05 p.m.

**15. Change of Designation of Seymour Demonstration Forest
Lands into a Regional Park**
File 5810-00/00

Moved by Councillor CRIST, Seconded by Councillor MUNROE and CARRIED

THAT Council of the District of North Vancouver urge the GVRD to designate as a regional park the lands located between the Lynn Headwaters Regional Park and Mount Seymour Provincial Park known as the Seymour Demonstration Forest.

*SEYMOUR DEMONSTRATION FOREST
SEYMOUR VALLEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA*



*S.P.E.C. RESPONSE TO
SEYMOUR ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT
ON THE FUTURE OF SEYMOUR DEMONSTRATION FOREST
REVISED SEPTEMBER, 1997*

**REPORT ON THE FUTURE
OF THE SEYMOUR DEMONSTRATION FOREST**

**WRITTEN AND COMPILED BY PAUL HUNDAL FOR
SOCIETY PROMOTING ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
OCTOBER, 1997**

FRONT COVER PHOTO:

FRONT COVER PHOTO SHOWS A 10 FOOT DIAMETER COASTAL DOUGLAS FIR PRESENTLY STANDING IN THE SEYMOUR DEMONSTRATION FOREST, SEYMOUR VALLEY, NEAR HYDRAULIC CREEK. THIS GIANT FIR IS LOCATED WITHIN A PROPOSED CUTBLOCK THAT THE SEYMOUR ADVISORY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED LOGGING BEFORE ANY ECOLOGICAL REVIEW IS DONE. NO OTHER COASTAL DOUGLAS FIRS OF THIS SIZE EXIST ANYWHERE ELSE IN ENTIRE SEYMOUR DEMONSTRATION FOREST. THIS TREE WAS STANDING WHEN COLUMBUS DISCOVERED AMERICA 500 YEARS AGO. RALF KELMAN, WHO FIRST BROUGHT PUBLIC ATTENTION TO THIS TREE IN 1991, IS SHOWN STANDING AT THE BASE OF THE TREE IN THE PHOTO.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

0 The Seymour Demonstration Forest ("SDF") is a 12,000 acre valley around Seymour River located in the District of North Vancouver less than half an hour travel time from downtown Vancouver. The area extends from Riverside Drive north to Seymour dam and is entirely owned and controlled by the Greater Vancouver Water District ("GVWD") for future reservoir purposes. It contains large old growth trees and some old growth forest in a large U shaped valley ideally suited for recreation of various types.

0 The area is entirely off catchment so there are no contamination concerns. GVWD staff estimated, in 1994, that they would not need the SDF as a reservoir for 75 to 100 years. The public has been permitted to use the area for recreational purposes for a decade. At this time over three hundred thousand (300,000) people visit the SDF each year with over 80% of those users being cyclists and roller bladers.

0 In 1994 the GVWD considered four options for the future management of the SDF: 1) Continue as a Demonstration Forest, 2) Create a Demonstration Watershed, 3) Create a Park and 4) Close SDF to the Public by banning all use. A summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each option, as stated by staff, is attached as Appendix A to this report in the form of an excerpt of a GVWD staff report dated July 15, 1994. (The park option was noted to be advantageous in lowering overall costs to the GVRD.)

0 The Seymour Advisory Committee ("SAC") report attached as Appendix B was also presented to the Water Committee at the July 15, 1994 Water Committee meeting along with the staff presentation of the above options report. The SAC report recommended a long term sustained yield harvesting program for the Seymour Demonstration Forest. Sustained yield logging means guaranteeing the logging of a specified volume of timber on average every year. In other words, the primary management goal would be to require logging a stipulated volume of timber out of the Seymour Demonstration Forest every year. This begs the question, why should we be committing ourselves to be forced to log in this highly valued recreation area a specified number of acres every year? We suggest that to do so is highly inappropriate.

0 Coastal Forest Lumber Assn ("CFLA"), an off shoot of the Council of Forest Industries ("COFI") offered to pay the costs of an ecological assessment designed to put together a long term harvesting program where the GVWD would log an average of 1% of the operable area of the S.D.F. per year (potentially up to 120 acres annually). It was arguable that the GVWD would have been legally committed to a "sustained yield" logging program contractually if we let CFLA spend this money. The SAC report recommendations also asked the Board to commit to sustained yield logging before the GVWD proceeded with an ecological assessment. The GVWD Board did not accept the CFLA offer and chose instead to conduct a more broader based

ecological analysis along the terms indicated in Mayor Northey's memo attached as Appendix C, instead of designing one strictly for the purpose of a logging plan.

0 The GVWD Water Committee also rejected the short term recommendations for logging contained in the SAC report, after a presentation by SPEC pointing out that one of the three blocks proposed was the last riparian old growth stand along the lower Seymour river and the second block contained the Hydraulic Creek giants shown on the cover of this report. These trees were brought to the attention of the GVWD in 1991 by Ralf Kelman who asked that they be protected because of their special heritage/recreation value. The SAC report recommended that these trees be logged before an ecological assessment was done and before the riparian zone trees receive any protection (It was suggested in the SAC report that the riparian zone be protected, but SAC wanted to log the old growth first and then protect what is left).

0 The GVWD Board nevertheless did approve Option 1 which by inference included a general endorsement of the SAC report but was made subject to a number of qualifications and subject to final approval after a public consultation process to take place upon completion of the ecological analysis. This has not been done yet.

0 SPEC submits that the GVWD should not proceed with the SAC recommendations but should switch instead to the lower cost park option (Option 3). This involves a simple transfer of administration from the Water department to the GVRD Park department which results in a cost savings because it eliminates redundancies. In the past when the Water department was running a logging operation similar to a Tree Farm Licence, it may have made sense to staff to include the SDF in the tree farm and run a demonstration forest. Now that the Water department is no longer commercially logging a specified annual cut, and hopefully is getting out of the logging business altogether, it does not make sense to make the logging of the SDF as one of the water department's duties.

0 SPEC further submits that regardless of whether a logging operation is profitable or not initially, the public is still left with significant silvicultural and soil erosion control costs for decades after. At a recent SAC meeting, one of the foresters was complaining that the tree plantations were not being properly "brushed out" and that it looked bad (brushing out means cutting out all the deciduous growth that tries to compete with the young fir seedlings). He said it sets a bad example for a "demonstration forest" silviculturally. The taxpayer of course would have to pay the cost of brushing out. With thousands of acres of tree plantations in the SDF already, can we really afford to operate a 12,000 acre "Forest Practices Code laboratory" where the taxpayer pays the high cost of maintaining a "perfect" tree farm.

0 SPEC further submits that continuing the "demonstration forest" as envisioned will lead to yearly controversy where every year recreationally or visually valuable sites will be fought over as the GVWD looks for more and more acres to cut in order

to meet their arbitrarily imposed annual logging quota. The GVWD is supposed to be in the business of supplying water to the public, not running a highly controversial logging operation in a heavily used, uniquely accessible recreation area. We submit that the SDF should be managed by the GVRD Parks department who are highly competent at caring for urban/wilderness recreation areas.

0 In order to satisfy the concern of future reservoir needs, the GVWD could lease the SDF to the GVRD for park purposes until such time as it is needed for reservoir purposes. It has been suggested that once it is a park, the public will not let it become a reservoir. This concern however exists whether it is a demonstration forest or a park. However, it should be noted that virtually all the SDF old growth is above the future floodline of a reservoir. Also the public could still use it as a park, if proper measures are taken, even after the reservoir is filled. This occurs in many cities.

0 S.P.E.C. commends the Water Committee's initiatives to require steps to be taken to identify and to protect selected old growth areas and areas of heritage interest. These are contained in a list of conditions prepared by Mayor Northey and dated Nov.3, 1994 (Appendix C). The Water Committee went further to support saving remaining old growth in the S.D.F. unless it is required to be cut under exceptional circumstances. Unfortunately they never specifically articulated this into a motion.

0 S.P.E.C. disagrees strongly with the Seymour Advisory Committee's characterization of the movie industry in the SDF as being "inevitably disruptive to the desired natural image of the S.D.F." (page 6, SAC report). Instead, S.P.E.C. believes that the use of the S.D.F. by the movie industry is far more preferable to that of logging 120 acres of that forest every year. The film crews leave no trace behind after completing a set and they use road access locations causing minor, if any, inconvenience to the public. Furthermore, it generates significantly greater revenues without any ill effects on the environment. The movie industry has contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars every year to the GVWD for use of small locations in the SDF. The SAC Report, now nicknamed by SAC as the Bell-Irving report, proposed zoning that would ban the movie industry immediately from some of the best sites that they presently use and that they be phased out over time. We disagree.

0 Our magnificent viewscape of the North Shore mountains is prized by both our billion dollar tourist industry as well as our residents. It is extremely ill-advised to in any way jeopardize this viewscape just to maintain some arbitrary level of annual logging. The SAC Report recommends logging the highly visible slopes of Seymour Mountain in their proposed logging plan. SAC made no mention whatsoever in their attached report about the significant, indeed shocking visual impact of their proposal. It is extremely concerning that SAC did not mention this most serious impact.

0 The vast majority of users of the S.D.F. are recreational users. Of the almost quarter of a million people who used the S.D.F. in 1993 only about 9,000 were there

to attend the S.D.F. forest education programs. The bulk of the users were cyclists and bladers who were there to enjoy the wilderness recreation experience of the S.D.F. in an area that happens to be less than half an hour away from downtown Vancouver. This area is also one of the very best, if not the best place, to roller blade in the region. The long road to the dam has highly restricted motorized traffic, a policy which we endorse, which means young or inexperienced roller bladers and cyclists can use the road safely with far less fear of being run over. This road is used heavily by families who can ride with their toddlers on this road away from traffic. Use of the road on a daily basis by logging trucks would seriously impact on the safety and usability of this road. Cyclists and bladers would have to be banned from the road when logging trucks are or may be using it. SAC has suggested at times banning cyclists and bladers altogether because of a perceived difficulty in restricting them.

0 Since the December, 1994 GVWD Board meeting, the GVWD staff were directed to proceed with their own ecological inventory based on the wider parameters outlined in Mayor Northey's memo attached as Appendix C. The broader range of recreational values were to be investigated through a public consultation process.

0 The SDF ecological inventory itself has been worked on over an extended period of time at GVWD expense and is now nearing completion. However, as stated earlier, none of the public consultation has been done over the future planning and values of the area. Only the SAC, a Committee appointed by staff, have been consulted and they voted to reaffirm their previous report (attached as Appendix B), without any changes, at their July, 1997 meeting.

0 SPEC does not consider the SAC to adequately represent the broad range of public values. For instance there are no cyclist or roller blader representatives on this Committee even though the vast majority of users are cyclists and roller bladers. SAC members were not appointed through any public process (advertising) or by the politicians. When a new chair was appointed this year, no mention or consultation was made whatsoever to the Board's Water Committee. The SAC is heavily represented by foresters and forestry interests whose primary interest seems to be to log the SDF.

0 SPEC submits that the option of designating the SDF as a regional park, which was proposed by the District of North Vancouver Council in 1983, is the very best option but has not been supported by GVWD staff or SAC, and has never been given reasonable consideration by the Board with the public's views being heard.

0 SPEC further submits that the SAC proposed zoning plan and their recommendations be rejected entirely. SAC's attack on the movie industry, their failure to acknowledge the serious view impacts of their proposal, the SAC's attempt to log the Hydraulic Creek giants and the last of the riparian old growth in the lower SDF before the ecological inventory was done, and the SAC's failure to represent cyclist's and blader's interests even though they are the majority user in the SDF all provide reasons to reject the SAC's recommendations and this list is not exhaustive.