
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2016PREM0113-001799
Sept. 26, 2016

Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource
Operations
Office of the Premier

Great Bear Rainforest legacy established

BELLA BELLA – A new \$1-million trust will be established to commemorate the visit of Their Royal Highnesses, The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and celebrate the endorsement of the Great Bear Rainforest under The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy initiative, Premier Christy Clark announced today.

The new Great Bear Rainforest Education and Awareness Trust will foster a deeper public recognition and appreciation of the unique nature of the Great Bear Rainforest and how the Government of B.C., First Nations, industry and environmental organizations developed a world class and innovative approach to manage both the natural environment and human activities.

Trust funds will be used to support various activities, including:

- Developing teacher and student resources centered on the Great Bear Rainforest that’s aligned to B.C.’s new curriculum.
- Raising public awareness of the Great Bear Rainforest and the people who have lived on B.C.’s Central and North Coast for more than 12,000 years.
- Resource management practices and supporting ongoing research.
- Investing in and support broader resource management based education, awareness and understanding in the Great Bear Rainforest area.

The new trust will be operational later this year. Fund disbursements will be overseen by an advisory board with representatives from government, First Nations and different sectors.

The Great Bear Rainforest covers 6.4 million hectares on British Columbia’s north and central coast, and is home to 26 separate First Nations. One-third of the 6.4-million-hectare area is fully protected, while the remainder allows low-impact resource development activities, such as forestry, tourism and hydro-electric generation to support the people living in the area.

Agreements were reached between the Province of B.C., Coastal First Nations and Nanwakolas Council for management of the area, based on recommendations submitted by three environmental groups (Greenpeace, Sierra Club BC and Stand) and five forest companies (BC Timber Sales, Catalyst Paper, Howe Sound Pulp & Paper, Interfor and Western Forest Products).

Premier Clark made the announcement at the official unveiling of the plaque proclaiming the Great Bear Rainforest as a forest conservation project under The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy. Commemorative posters are also being distributed to schools throughout the province.

Quotes:

Premier Christy Clark –

“The Great Bear Rainforest is not only a source of pride for all British Columbians – it’s a global treasure, one that we have a unique responsibility to protect, and to make sure the world knows how unique and valuable it is.”

Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations Minister Steve Thomson –

“I believe the lessons we’ve learned in arriving at the agreements we’ve reached in the Great Bear Rainforest should be shared with the next generation. I think we’ve proven how environmental values and resource development needs can be effectively balanced.”

Chief Marilyn Slett, president, Coastal First Nations –

“A Great Bear Rainforest public awareness program will promote and facilitate dialogue on issues related to land use agreements, healthy relationships and reconciliation between First Nations, governments and others. The new Trust also ensures that our collective work results in a B.C. curriculum that honours First Nations cultures, histories and languages of the people who have lived on B.C.’s central and north coast for more than 12,000 years.”

Dallas Smith, president, Nanwakolas Council –

“It's so important to take the lessons learned from the Great Bear Rainforest and share them. It's a world class model that has to be broken down and understood so it can be applied in other places and areas with conflict within Canada and around the world.”

Joe Nemeth, president and CEO of Catalyst Paper Corp., on behalf of the Coast Forest Conservation Initiative comprised of: BC Timber Sales, Catalyst, Howe Sound Pulp & Paper Corp., Interfor Corp., and Western Forest Products Inc. –

“This new trust will create the educational foundation by which tomorrow’s young adults will develop an appreciation for B.C.’s world-leading sustainable forest management and the importance of its economic, social and environmental benefits.”

Eduardo Sousa of Greenpeace, Jens Wieting of Sierra Club BC, Valerie Langer of Stand (formerly ForestEthics) –

“The endorsement of the Great Bear Rainforest under The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy initiative is an honour for this spectacular region. This endorsement and the newly created educational trust fund are a welcome recognition of the years of collaborative work to develop big solutions for conservation and indigenous rights, while establishing a consensus on forestry that operates within nature's limits. The Great Bear Rainforest represents a model the Commonwealth community and beyond, can build upon.”

Learn More:

- Great Bear Rainforest: www.gov.bc.ca/greatbearrainforest
- The Queen’s Commonwealth Canopy: www.queenscommonwealthcanopy.org
- Information on 2016 Royal Tour: <http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1466181306703>

Media Contacts:

Stephen Smart
Press Secretary
Office of the Premier
778 389-6202

Vivian Thomas
Communications Director
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural
Resource Operations
250 356-2475

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: www.gov.bc.ca/connect