



Creston Valley

Advance

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Duck, Arrow headwaters too fragile to log

by Sue Betcher

The headwaters of the Duck and Arrow Creek watersheds are very critical areas' and logging

interests should 'stay out'.

That was the opinion offered by a soil analysis expert who produced a report on the area for

the B.C. Forest Service.

Kent Watson was speaking at a special meeting of the Public Advisory Committee to the Forest

Service held Tuesday in Creston.

When asked his personal opinion on logging in the area, in light of the quality and quantity of the

water provided by the two creeks, Watson said he is concerned with the environment.

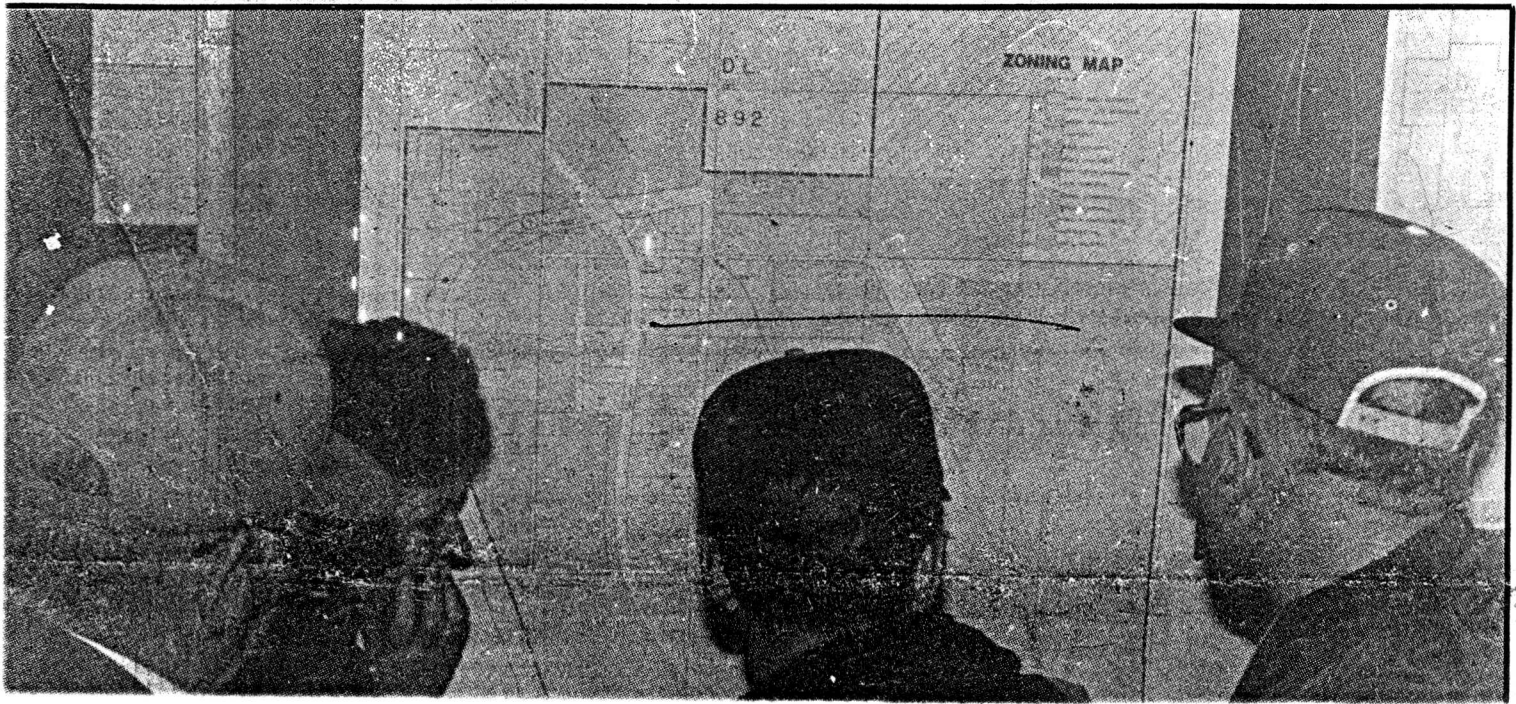
'I've seen a lot of areas destroyed,' he said. 'We want what is best for Creston. If it's logged and wrecked, Creston suffers. If it's logged and not wrecked, I'd be happy to be proved wrong,' he said.

The expert said that the issue of logging in the watersheds was 'the touchiest' he had ever been involved in.

'A lot of care would have to be taken,' he added.

But, Watson said, there are areas of stable soil conditions which would be harvested now without damage to the environment, on the strength of his study.

The area is in the Wynndel Box and Logging sphere of influence and contains approximately 136 square kilometres of land. Watson pointed out that the maps and report do not imply that logging will take place in the area, but that they form part of the data





ned residents study the zoning

Advance Photo

Concerns

was created.

Most residents, whether orchard owners, or owners of property that has two different zonings on it, were worried that the zoning laws would require some change from them. Mosher explained that zoning cannot force any changes to existing property.

There was one request during the meeting for a zoning change, from Mr. Doug Kinney, who wanted to have a strip of land at the back of his property zoned as tourist commercial, which would enable him to build a recreational-vehicle park. Kinney's land is zoned R6 now, which provides for residential trailers on the land.

Gordon Veitch questioned the

destroyed, he said. We want what is best for Creston. If it's logged and wrecked, Creston suffers. If it's logged and not wrecked, I'd be happy to be proved wrong,' he said.

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But, Watson said, there are areas of stable soil conditions which would be harvested now without damage to the environment, on the strength of his study.

The area is in the Wynndel Box and Logging sphere of influence and contains approximately 136 square kilometres of land. Watson pointed out that the maps and report do not imply that logging will take place in the area, but that they form part of the data base on which a decision to log would be made.

The mapping was commissioned by the Forest Service in 1979 and received by members of the PAC on Monday.

Public Involvement Officer for the Forest Service Steve Fleit of Nelson stressed throughout the meeting that a task force would be established to study all facets of logging in the watersheds and formulate a management plan which would then be approved by the district office of the Ministry of Forests.

In response to a question on responsibility for the watershed, Gary Boyden of Wynndel Box pointed out that the company by law, must follow the logging plan, but added that some things cannot be guaranteed, particularly acts of nature.

Members of irrigation districts expressed concern that water flow would be decreased if clear-cut logging were allowed in the area. Forest Service hydrologist Dave Toews of Nelson pointed out that trees 'acted as wicks' and used water in the soil, while clear cut areas 'acted as a sponge, holding the water.' This point was disputed, using Sullivan Creek as an example during the very dry summer of 1977.

Watson concluded by saying that the roads and skid trails into the area were the main concerns because of the instability of the soil. Cable systems, he said, might be one answer to the problem.

Continued page 2

Forestry under fire for logging plans

by Len Langevin

Plans to log an area 'technically' within the Arrow Creek watershed have members of Erickson Improvement District and Duck Arrow Task Force upset with the ministry of Forests.

About one-third of a cut block which has been sold is 'technically' within the boundaries of the Arrow Creek Watershed,' said Steve Flett, forestry information officer. But he adds the area consists of 'very quiet terrain with 10-20 per cent slopes...and there are no streams identified in the block.'

Flett also noted the block is located at a higher level of the watershed—an elevation of about 4,500 feet.

The rest of the area is located in the Okell Creek drainage area behind Arrow Mountain which drains below the intake on Arrow Creek.

Flett's argument, however, doesn't hold any water with task force member Albert Brunham.

He told the *Advance* the timber licence will be a main topic of discussion at Wednesday's Public Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting.

Brunham, who chairs the PAC, contends the ministry has been allowing logging to take place along the Arrow Creek watershed borders. Often, he said, the logging will encroach the protected watershed boundary.

Flett agrees the area 'has been and still is protected, but it looked as though (the licenced portion) was all in the Okell Creek drainage area' before the timber sale took place.

Under a 1984 signed agreement, any logging proposals in either Arrow or Sullivan creek watersheds would come before the Erickson

Improvement District trustees before being sold.

Any logging in the watershed also has to be approved by the Duck-Arrow Task Force which is chaired by Flett.

'It appears these assurances and promises...have fallen by the wayside,' said Elvin Masuch, EID board chairman, in a letter to Flett.

The letter, which was also sent to town council, was referred to council's task force members on the recommendation of Ald. Vaughan Mosher.

'We should find out the exact (logging) area. There are parts of the watershed that are safe to log, but they're few and far between,' Mosher told council at its last meeting.

Since Flett received Masuch's letter, the area in question has been toured by both men and other members of the EID, said Flett, and 'the opinion of the group is that the (logging) is not as worrisome a situation as originally felt.'

But Masuch told the *Advance* Wednesday that his concerns have not changed much since his December 30 letter and the EID is still against any logging within the watershed.

EID trustees Tuesday gave B.C. Forest Services the option of either removing the watershed land from the 56-hectare cut block or signing a letter saying the BCFS would take full responsibility for any effects in water condition.

'We feel it is a sensitive area in regards to water quality,' said Masuch.

He added he can't see how the ministry could have thought all of the sale lot was in the Okell Creek area because 'it's quite plain on the map...Okell Creek is on one side and Arrow Creek is on the other.'



Back at work

enjoying a short break Norm Barrette, George Piccin, Eddie Hills and Wayne

MacLean are on the job, thanks to a \$30,000 federal grant (see story page 3). *Advance Photo*



Watershed logging on meeting agenda

By Len Langevin

Plans to log portions of the Arrow Creek Watershed and a slash burn which caused a forest fire will make up a large portion of Wednesday's Public Advisory Committee to the forestry meeting.

Logging plans for the watershed have members from the Erickson Improvement District, PAC and Duck Arrow Task Force concerned about water quality in the area, while RDCK director Elvin Masuch will bring up the Skelly Creek fire caused by a slash burn.

Masuch, who called the Skelly Creek incident a 'fiasco', introduced a resolution at last Saturday's regional district meeting calling for the cancellation of controlled slash burning until an evaluation of bur-

ning practices is completed.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

In a motion, Masuch cited the forest fires caused by slash burnings cost the taxpayers large amounts of money.

The Skelly Creek fire cost taxpayers \$600,000 and burned 1,734 acres, of which 392 contained one-year-old plantation, noted the resolution directed to Jack Kempf, Minister of Lands and Forests.

Steve Flett, forestry information officer, said he also will be reviewing slash burning at the PAC meeting.

'It will probably take up a large portion of the meeting. I want to discuss the dos and don'ts of slash burning and see if the Skelly fire could have been prevented.'

In another forestry-related resolution introduced by Masuch, the regional district called for the province to re-evaluate the ministry's practices in regards to staff reductions and office closures affecting public service.

With our surrounding area very sensitive to logging, Masuch told the *Advance*, the Creston forestry office cannot afford any more cutbacks.

He added he has heard rumors of the Creston office being closed.

Flett told the *Advance* he will be introducing the forestry's access planning program—a long-term process to determine needs of all forest use.

Wednesday's PAC meeting starts at 7 p.m. at the Creston forestry office.

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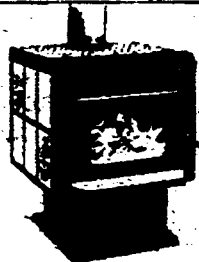
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Chamber of Commerce seminar to discuss future of Creston

What is Creston's future?

The Creston Chamber of Commerce will attempt to answer that question as its members will host a one day meeting titled 'Creston Futures '87' on February 5, 1987.

Chamber manager Gail Greenwood said the meeting will focus on the direction Creston is taking, and will include discussion on economic, societal and other developments in the community.

The schedule will include talks conducted by Chuck Dary, Director for Community Economic Development from the Provincial

Ministry of Economic Development and Creston Mayor Lela Irvine.

The day will also feature a brainstorming session, ad hoc groups, defining community strengths and weaknesses and identifying economic opportunities available in the area.

Greenwood said this format has been used and found successful in other communities.

The listed objectives for the day are to develop a common vision on local economic development among key economic sector representatives, community

leaders and the public.

To identify general community strengths and weaknesses, and realistic economic development opportunities.

To foster free thinking while sparing the participants the inhibiting threat of ridicule.

In a release from the Chamber of Commerce it is stated that wild and extreme ideas are encouraged, and while others may build on those ideas they may not criticize a proposal.

A moderator will be used to explain the purpose of the meeting, motivate groups, summarize

Job loss feared if watershed spared

By Patrick Berting

The Town of Creston's stance against logging in the Arrow Creek watershed has the Creston forest industry fuming.

Gary Boyden, woodlands manager with Wynndel Box and Lumber Co., is concerned about the economic implications of logging in the town's water catchment area. 'I take exception to (Mayor) Irvine's comments (at the January 9 council meeting) that we are not going to log, especially considering the number of jobs at stake,' he told the *Advance*.

The employees of J.H. Huscroft Ltd., Crestbrook Forest Industries Ltd. and Wynndel Box and Lumber Co. 'will lose their jobs with the reduction in the annual allowable cut that will result if this timber is removed,' wrote Boyden in the Creston Forestry Association's response to the

Ministry of Forests' Duck and Arrow Watersheds Task Force Report. He added that representatives of the forest industry workers should have been notified about the study and allowed to participate in it since their jobs are at stake.

In Boyden's opinion, the loss of jobs caused by removal of the watershed from Wynndel Box and Lumber Co.'s annual allowable cut would be more important than the financial loss to Wynndel Box and Lumber Co.

That logging in the area could ever cause permanent closure of the brewery or destroy the valley's agriculture industry is 'inconceivable' to the logging companies. Boyden's report admits, however, that there is a risk of economic damage through disruption of the water supply for the brewery and agriculture.

Boyden turned to history for

proof that logging the Arrow Creek watershed will have less of an impact than the natural disasters that have occurred. He noted that past wildfires and subsequent salvage logging did not prevent the establishment of a brewery in Creston, and that agriculture in the valley flourished despite extensive fires in the watershed in the '40s and '50s.

The forest industry criticized the Ministry of Forests for not including a representative of the mining industry on the task force. Considering that there has been widespread mineral exploration in the area there should have been one.

Another criticism is that the task force report makes no mention of the value of the forest industry to the valley's economy while describing the brewing and agriculture industries as vital to Creston.

Boyden said that council's insistence that any logging in the town's water catchment area be done with helicopters is unjustified: 'You still have to make roads with helicopter logging,' he said. The forest companies never proposed to log by conventional means, 'but, our options don't include helicopter logging.' His company would use high-lead cables and light floatation skidders to lessen environmental impact of harvesting.

Boyden also criticized Erickson Improvement District chairman Elvin Masuch for advising further 'time-wasting' studies be conducted when there is a mass of data available.

The general public will have the opportunity to air their views on the issue at a Ministry of Forests hearing to be held in February.



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Creston Valley Advance - Oct 17/96

Water source said at risk

By Chris Laursen
Advance Staff

Only the community uniting to take immediate, adamant action will stop logging at the source of Creston's and Erickson's drinking water, members of Protect Our Watershed say.

The Arrow Creek watershed will be logged, said Tanna Patterson. She, along with other members of the group set up to protect Arrow Creek's watershed, wants to change that.

"The Ministry of Forests and government officials say it's in the annual allowable cut and there's nothing anybody can do about it," Sue Low, an Erickson orchardist and member of POW, said of plans to log the watershed.

"But we can change that. It can always be changed," said another orchardist, Marcie Plotnikoff.

Sitting on Patterson's sun-deck overlooking the Erickson orchards, the three women talked about what the community will have to do to protect the Arrow Creek watershed.

Low and Patterson have taken hikes through the watershed, with the approval of the Erickson Improvement District which manages the water, and say the area should be protected and remain untouched.

"When we started exploring the watershed, it was my



Photo by Chris Laursen

Marcie Plotnikoff, Sue Low and Tanna Patterson (from left) toast the idea of pure drinking water.

idea of a pristine area," said Low. "We don't have many pristine areas left anymore, so why should we screw up another one?"

"Certain areas should be left untouched."

Low explained that pro-logging advocates and the government might reply that there are areas which are already protected.

She said she would reply: "What a better area to protect than Arrow Creek?"

The Arrow Creek water-

shed houses an ecological diverse wilderness, including old-growth forest at the headwaters of the creek, a caribou herd and other untouched plants and animals, the POW members said.

Wynndel Box and Lumber was slated to start building roads into the watershed in accordance with a forest development plan, Patterson said. But the company delayed doing so while awaiting results of ecological stud-

ies being done in Arrow Creek as part of the Forest Practices Code.

Road building and logging is what concerns Protect Our Watershed. At an East Kootenay Environmental Society meeting Oct. 8 Erickson Improvement District trustee and Regional District of Central Kootenay director Elvin Masuch said that logging and watershed don't go together.

See "Sullivan..." on page 8

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Orchardists go organic without chlorination

By Chris Laursen
Advance Staff

Like many Erickson residents, Sue Low, Marcie Plotnikoff and Tanna Patterson say they don't want their water chlorinated.

If the water remains unchlorinated, "the valley can become organic as far as orchards go," said Plotnikoff, an Erickson orchardist. "I hope with the codling moth program — the SIR (Sterile Insect Release) program — we can become organic. Most orchards would rather not spray."

"I know an organic farmer who told me it would be the end of his business if they put chlorine in the water," Patterson said.

The three women, along

with other concerned valley residents, have formed Protect Our Watersheds (POW), a group designed to raise awareness of Creston's and Erickson's water source and to stop logging from taking place there.

The water could be chlorinated if problems, such as silt and mud polluting Arrow Creek due to mudslides from road building, arose.

A mudslide occurred in West Creston's Corn Creek watershed in the spring shortly after J.H. Huscroft built a logging road there, water protection advocate Al Ryan said at an East Kootenay Environment Society meeting Oct. 8. (More on that issue in the Oct. 24 Advance.)

"I don't want chlorine in the water," Plotnikoff said. "I want my children to grow up without drinking chlorinated water."

Drinking water, the three

women say, is their number one concern.

"We have to get everyone on side," Patterson said.

"People say it won't happen, that it won't affect them," said Plotnikoff. "Some of them don't even know where their water comes from."

That's why POW formed, said Low, to educate people about the watershed.

Plotnikoff suggested that a public meeting like the one held in 1989, which succeeded in putting a five-year logging moratorium on Arrow Creek, could be held.

At last week's EKES meeting, Erickson Improvement District trustee Elvin Masuch said that was the largest turnout he'd ever seen at a public meeting.

POW urged the organization of a similar meeting soon.

More coverage on Page 9.

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Sullivan Creek a case in point

Continued from page 1.

Masuch pointed out what happened in the Sullivan Creek watershed in 1974 after Crestbrook Forest Industries logged that area. He said the creek has gone dry twice, plus the water quality has declined.

Patterson said it would be of great concern if Arrow Creek, which supplies drinking water to Creston and Erickson, as well as the water supply to Columbia Brewing Company and valley orchards, went dry because of the snowpack running off of logged areas.

She said that old-growth timber at the headwaters holds back the snowpack and naturally filters the meltwater into Arrow Creek throughout the year, which means water users have no shortage of water.

The POW members added that water pressure could also be affected by a smaller amount of water running down Arrow Creek during the year.

(Part Two in a series about logging in watersheds. Part Three, which will appear in the Oct. 24 Advance, will examine J.H. Huscroft's point of view on a Corn Creek watershed mudslide.)

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Countdown to logging with licence

By Shauna Lowry
Advance Staff

The Creston Valley Forest Corporation is officially open for business after Nelson-Creston MLA Corky Evans presented president Bob Griffith with its forest licence Monday.

The CVFC was notified of the licence Jan. 12, 10 months after the Town of Creston's forest licence proposal was first accepted in March.

"This is a culmination of a whole bunch of people's life work," Evans said. "I want to say thanks. I didn't do it, (Forests Minister) David Zirnelt didn't do it, (Premier) Glen Clark didn't do it.

"This is a grand experiment that people here accomplished."

The licence's operating area, determined in May, includes the community watersheds of Arrow, Sullivan and Camp Run creeks. Arrow Mountain is also included within the area.

The corporation will receive annual contracts of up to 15,000 cubic metres for at least the next 15 years. Logging is expected to begin in 1999.

"The intent for the wood is to be used locally, including J.H. Huscroft, Wynndel Box and Lumber, other small mills and value-added operators," said Gary Boyden, a forest economic development officer with Forest Renewal B.C. and a community representative of the CVFC board.

See "Public..." on page 2.

Local News

Public consultation promised

Continued from page 1.

"The corporation doesn't intend to hire (its) own loggers. The intent at this point is to contract out the logging, road construction and hauling as well as silviculture work."

Creston's community forest licence was a response to cuts in logging quotas first introduced in 1995 and related job losses in the Kootenay Lake timber area.

Creston and Kaslo are the only communities with forest licences in Evans's constituency.

"It has to work here because other people are

watching and would like to do the same thing," Evans said. "If it works, it will make governing in the next century a whole lot easier.

"As it turns out, being a politician in the latter part of the century means being part of a community deeply divided by environmental and industrial (concerns). This split between preservation and industrial use will be moderated and Creston is leading the way."

CVFC is seeking management services for its licence, accepting proposals until Tuesday.

"(The successful candidate)

will work with or on behalf of the board to help prepare necessary plans and operations," Griffith said.

According to Boyden, the next step is preparing a five-year development plan, "an all-encompassing plan that incorporates road plans, cutting permit plans, silviculture plans and watershed planning."

Public input will be considered throughout the planning process, but it's not yet known when.

"The public will be involved early in all of the planning processes, not after the plan is prepared," Boyden said

Local News

Overcutting a concern

By Shauna Lowry
Advance Staff

Is it seeing the forest for the trees or seeing the trees for the forest?

That is the conflict between environmental and industrial concerns as B.C.'s forests are pulled in opposing directions — one wanting less wood and one wanting more.

An Innovative Forestry Practices Agreement, which eight Kootenay Lake forest licensees have jointly applied for, will provide an opportunity for increased annual allowable cuts (AAC) to successful applicants.

"That's one of the dangers," East Kootenay Environmental Society president Ray Marriner said. "The previous reduction still left allowable cuts 100,000 cubic metres above the average cut of the previous five years.

"Certainly our forests are overcut."

Kootenay Lake Forest District's AACs were reduced by 22 per cent in 1995.

Responsible harvesting methods are the key to sustainable resources, according to Marriner, who represents the EKES on the Creston Valley

"Some of the projects may be environmentally oriented . . . We shouldn't hold our breath on it probably."

— Ray Marriner

Forest Corporation board.

EKES is one of five shareholders in the CVFC. EKES vice-president Ralph Moore is also on the CVFC board as a community representative.

"There are forestry cuts that can be used, like commercial thinning and salvage operations," Marriner said. "I would say that because the opportunity to get some funds for community forest licences to pursue their ideals of different kinds of logging, it may be beneficial.

"That is why we have agreed to get ourselves involved in this. It is potentially more a benefit than a detri-

ment. As a community forest licence, we advocate very environmentally sensitive logging."

Marriner hopes some of the innovative projects IFPA holders propose will address environmental concerns, although he remains unconvinced.

"Some of the projects involved may be environmentally oriented," he said. "It may not have all that much effect. We shouldn't hold our breath on it probably."

Eligible activities as outlined by the Ministry of Forests include: alternative harvesting methods and silviculture systems; forest resources enhancement; increased forest productivity; biological diversity protection; and, more accurate growth and yield information.

Agreement holders are also required to follow the Forest Practices Code.

Marriner does see the joint proposal as a positive step.

"The concept of working together on these things is something we always advocate," he said. "It's fairly dissimilar organizations working together, but that is the only way to go."

Advance

Monday, June 1, 1998

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Water quality in Smith's hands

By Shauna Lowry
Advance Staff

Jim Smith is walking on sensitive ground both figuratively and literally.

Announced as manager of the Creston Valley Forest Corporation's community forest licence Wednesday, the local resident is responsible for overseeing the harvesting of watershed areas in the Creston Valley.

The most controversial area is the entire Arrow Creek watershed, including Okelle Creek, the corporation's biggest operating area.

"It has to be one of the most valuable watersheds in the southern Interior because it supplies water to the (Columbia) Brewery," Smith said, estimating the water's

value at \$220 million per year.

The watershed also supplies the Town of Creston, most of the orchards in Erickson and the Erickson Improvement District.

"In the peak season, the community uses six million gallons per day," Smith said.

The back end of Arrow Creek includes old-growth spruce and balsam forests.

"The headwaters contain some very valuable timber and it is the primary area in Arrow Creek that contains old-growth timber," he said. "It's where most of the water originates and is highly sensitive to logging.

"Part of the reason it is so

sensitive is because it burned in the '40s and part of the protection just isn't there. The parts that are still forested are very important to protect the water."

According to Smith, the CVFC will not go into the Arrow Creek operating area right away.

"We've got to be very careful what we do," he said. "We're going to start in less-contentious areas to gain some experience with gentler forest practices and also to build some trust with the community."

"Trust is built on performance. We're going to work hard to work with the community and develop gentle

forestry techniques in less sensitive areas so that once we get into Arrow Creek, as a corporation we'll know what we can do and the community will know what we can do."

Ironically, Smith sat on the province's first public advisory committee to the B.C. Forest Service, which began in 1977 in the Creston area. The committee was dedicated to keeping logging out of Arrow Creek.

"It was the primary vehicle that people have used to make sure logging around the Creston community was going to be appropriate and logging was not going to happen in Arrow Creek," he said.

See "Stance..." on page 20.



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See "Stance..." on page 20.

Stance reversed

Continued from page 1.

Smith is now on the other side of the fence along with two other former committee members, Regional District of Central Kootenay director Elvin Masuch and East Kootenay Environmental Society vice-president Ralph Moore, both of whom are now CVFC directors.

"EKES and EID and a number of other groups tried to get Arrow Creek preserved (in the Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plan)," Smith said. "That didn't happen. That left Arrow Creek — this very, very valuable watershed — in the cut."

According to Smith, that means the area became part of the land base for annual allowable cuts for the Kootenay timber supply.

"It's not, 'Is Arrow Creek going to be logged,' it's, 'Who?' " he said. "Then along came the concept of a community forest licence."

"The local people here who had been fighting saw it as an opportunity to at least be in control of the logging."

Smith expects the corporation to start harvesting in the Lipsett area at the bottom of Thompson Mountain.

The Thompson Mountain

operating area includes Sullivan Creek, another watershed for the EID.

Camp Run Creek in the Thompson Mountain region, supplies water for the North Canyon Water District.

Arrow Mountain (also referred to as Goat Mountain), is another operating area which supplies small watersheds to people in the vicinity.

The licence also includes a small piece of Crown land in Lister, which has been logged since the turn of the century.

"It's primary value right now is recreation and wildlife," Smith said. "It's sensitive for those values. All these areas are quite sensitive."

Smith expects to submit the licence's forest development plan, a legal requirement to the B.C. Forest Service by Sept. 1. Planning is expected to continue until spring 1999, with harvesting to begin in July or August 1999.

"Where we're at right now is we're in the planning stage, which means we're having a good look at parts of the forest and gathering some inventory data as to what we have, what kind of timber there is and what other values there (are), like indications of wildlife use,



Photos by Shauna Lowry

Jim Smith investigates harvesting area on Arrow Mountain.

indications of recreational use and indications of water use," Smith said.

Three local contractors — Treestep Forestry Consultants, Surewood Forest Consultants and Joe Rudolf — have been hired to do the field work.

"One of our goals is to use local people here — foresters, contractors, loggers," said Smith, a 27-year veteran of the forest industry who practises "gentle forest stewardship."

"I think (the CVFC board) is taking a really pro-active approach to innovative forest harvesting, those techniques that have been proven to protect wildlife and water and recreation," Smith said.

Harvesting methods other than clear-cutting that are being investigated include:

- single-tree selection, in which individual trees are marked and the poorest quality specimens are taken while the highest quality trees are left behind;

- group selection, in which one-quarter hectare sections are cut to gather snow so there

more water, which doesn't damage the stream channels because snow melt is delayed;

- shelter wood, which leaves the best trees for seed and shade to keep moisture for young trees coming up underneath; and,

- patch cuts with reserves, in which trees are left scattered throughout a patch cut to decrease root competition.

Smith expects the first harvesting of Creston's community forest licence to be commercial thinning in the form of single-tree selection.

The corporation, which must harvest an average of 15,000 cubic metres per year for the next 15 years, is planning to cut 30,000 cubic metres in 1999.

In reality, it could take 45,000 since the cut control was issued in 1997. It may then take 22,500 cubic metres the following two years and finally even out at 15,000 cubic metres in 2003.

EKES, which has two representatives on the CVFC board, is resigned to the harvesting that will take place in the Creston Valley, according to past-president Tanna Patterson.

"What most of us wanted was preservation of the watershed," she said. "Whenever there's activity in a watershed it degrades the quality of the water."

"Since we can't have that we have to settle for second best. At least we're managing our own watershed. It isn't the best but it's the best we can do."



Patterson also feels the CVFC is working with EKES and its environmental concerns, "and I like the person they've hired as manager," she said.

As a community forest licence, public process will be encouraged, Smith said.

"I rented an office downtown as part of my commitment in my management proposal so that people could feel they could drop in and talk about the community licence," he said. "Because it's a community forest licence we really want to encourage people to be involved, come in with their ideas or concerns and we will do our best to accommodate those concerns."

Public meetings are expected to be held, although no dates have been set.

"What we want to do is get public input and build it into our forest development plan so when we give it to the B.C. Forest Service it essentially has gone through a public process already," Smith said.

Local News

Watershed logging opponents surface

By Shauna Lowry
Advance Staff

To log or not to log is no longer the question.

Although the purpose of a Monday night meeting was to

provide input into the Creston Valley Forest Corporation's forest plan, discussion centred around opposition to logging in local watersheds, specifically Arrow Creek.

"I tell you it scares me —

the road construction and conventional logging — it scares me," said Elvin Masuch, Area B director for the Regional District of Central Kootenay and a CVFC board member. "I look at Sullivan Creek and what's happened there in the last five years."

Masuch explained at the meeting, attended by two dozen people, how old forestry roads built around the creek on the northwest face of Thompson Mountain 30 years ago are now collapsing and threatening the water.

"Sullivan Creek took a terrible beating," he said. "The shoulder of the road sloughed in. Now we've got major damage. The dam is filled with debris. The water couldn't be used for three weeks."

"There's one thing we've got to say here and I think everybody will agree: if we go in there the watershed will be put at risk. That's why we fought the Forest Service for 24 years on this and they



"There's one thing we've got to say here . . . if we go in there the watershed will be put at risk."

— Elvin Masuch

didn't go in there because they knew the risk was there."

According to Masuch, a 1989 study of the value of water from the Arrow Creek watershed was estimated at \$129 million since it provides for the Columbia Brewery, orchardists and vegetable farmers and the Town of Creston.

The value of 300 loads of logs from the area, including the value of the timber, lumber, wood chips, stumpage, annual rent and taxes, is estimated at \$1.3 million.

"If you look at this thing simply in an economic manner you would say it's not even an issue whether you should put that watershed at risk," Masuch said. "What I see is greed. We want both — the water and the timber. The thing is all I can hope is we don't kill the goose."

Creston resident Audrey Vance questioned the validity of the government providing the CVFC with a community forest licence.

See "Lack..." on page 17.

The Valley

Lack of watershed protection questioned

Continued from page 2.

"I think the government has given a local group this opportunity so they have a scapegoat," Vance told the audience. "I want a promise from this group. If you feel you have to move ahead you better unite this community before we have no water left. You have a real job here."

Vance also questioned why Nelson's watersheds were protected in the Kootenay-Boundary Land Use Plan while Creston's were not.

"I know we didn't have a choice — we didn't get together as a group," Vance said. "I'm concerned because I know we lost out politically. Politically, we'll be ready for them next time."

"Nelson was united in protecting their watershed," said Ralph Moore, vice-president of the East Kootenay Environmental Society and a CVFC director. "It's too bad Creston couldn't get their act together during the CORE process."

Andy Shadrack, provincial Green Party candidate from Kaslo, asked the board members if they were willing to put their licence where their mouth is.

"If you decide it's not ecologically feasible to continue, and it might mean lowering the cut, will you be willing to stand up to the government?" he said.

Smith responded, "The cut is merely an estimate of what can come out of there. If we found we couldn't operate without putting the water at risk, ethically, we'd have to say to the Forest Service we have to reduce this cut."

Erickson resident Bonnie Boldt was another vocal advocate of protecting the watersheds.

"It's true we have been (opposing) this for 25 years," she said. "Nobody has been listening to us. You've been feeding us slide shows, maps and videos for 25 years."

"Logging the watersheds might mean our lives — our very survival. It's worth more than the wood. It is worth untold billions just in terms of human survival."

Boldt also commented on the motives of the CVFC.

"You call yourselves a corporation. I think that says it all," she said.

Tom Mann, RDCK director for Area C and a CVFC director, was disturbed by that comment.

"Those of us on the board get no remuneration and no director's liability," he said. "We were prepared to put our assets on the line and it's very disconcerting to have people come up and tell us we're a bunch of profiteers."

Mann also announced he will be stepping down from his post on the CVFC when his term expires at the end of this month "due to time commitments and attitudes like (Boldt's)."

Although the CVFC is planning to log first in the

less-contentious portions of its operating area — Lister, Lipsett, Arrow Mountain, Big Bear Creek and southwest Arrow Creek — it won't be long before logging Arrow Creek becomes a must, Masuch said.

"You take the Lipsett area, there's not much there," he said. "What I could see there seems to be 16 years of logging if you scalp it. It will be more like five years and then they go into Arrow Creek."

The forest licence has been granted 15,000 cubic metres a

year, which equals approximately 500 truckloads of logs.

"I'll tell you that is a lot of logs," Masuch said. "The concept of the community forest licence has one purpose and that's to harvest Arrow Creek."

"If the scenario is repeated like it was in Sullivan Creek I hate to think of it. It's a nightmare. The economic losses would be enormous."

Masuch commended Vance and Boldt for coming forward with their concerns.

"The women are coming forward to fight this thing," he said. "I give them a lot of credit. Maybe the women are going to save it."


Masuch maintains the seriousness of the issue.

"I've got some very serious concerns," he said. "I've been accused of being too protective of Arrow Creek. I don't think anybody can be too protective of Arrow Creek. It is one of the most valuable watersheds in the province. That water is so vital to this valley."

"If we found we couldn't operate without putting the water at risk, ethically, we'd have to say to the Forest Service we have to reduce this cut."

— Jim Smith

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Public blew chance, CVFC director says

By Shauna Lowry
Advance Staff

Creston Valley Forest Corporation staff and directors were disappointed by the turnout and focus of their Monday night meeting.

"I was very disappointed with how few people braved the heat and showed up," said Ralph Moore, vice-president of the East Kootenay Environmental Society and one of 10 CVFC directors.

Only 25 people attended the meeting, with approximately 10 of those from the public. The majority of attendees were CVFC directors and staff.

"Maybe it means everybody is totally satisfied with what we're doing and is confident in our abilities," Moore added. "I would really have loved to see 150 people show up. The people in this valley will moan but they won't do a damn thing."

"Here's actually a process where people can be involved, the first time people can actually direct how things are being done. There must have been something good on TV."

The meeting's discussion quickly turned to logging sensitive watersheds in the Creston Valley.

"That whole topic is something that has been hashed over before," CVFC's community forest licence manager Jim Smith said. "That issue is now done. The decision was made."

"In the meantime our mandate is to develop the timber in this operating area."

Added Moore, "We really didn't get a lot of input. It might be too soon for that."

People may need some time to digest. A few questions would have been nice."

According to Gordie Grunerud, Kootenay Lake Forest District's timber officer, Creston's watersheds were always included in the district's cut.

"It was already scheduled for logging," he said from Nelson. "When the community applied for their licence it was given to them because they figured who better to do it."

"They are in control of their own destiny. They have the flexibility."

Smith, using maps and a slide show, explained the reconnaissance survey conducted on four portions of the CVFC's operating area.

Lister, Lipsett, Arrow Mountain, Big Bear Creek and southwest Arrow Creek are expected to provide 257,000 cubic metres of gross volume.

"I'm quite happy with the volume we've found in these areas and quite confident we can develop a

five-year plan and have lots of volume while being gentle with the land," Smith said. "I think it's going to provide us with the harvesting we need and allow us to protect the other values."

Smith is also pleased with the variety of species in the operating area, which includes ponderosa pine, larch, hemlock, lodgepole pine, douglas fir and grand fir.

"It will allow us to play the market," he said. "Hardly ever is everything down. For example, cedar right now is still at a fair value."

"We'll be able to harvest for specific markets to ensure our



"I would really have loved to see 150 people . . . The people in this valley will moan but they won't do a damn thing."

— Ralph Moore

financial viability. It's going to allow us the opportunity to encourage new markets — utilization of small wood, utilization of cedar, perhaps encourage selling logs to more specialty businesses as well as supplying logs to local mills."

Most of the areas surveyed have been logged previously.

A 200-hectare section has been logged many times, according to Smith.

"As far as timber goes, there's not a lot of opportunity but there's a lot of opportunity for restoration," Smith said. "It's heavily used by wildlife and for recreation."

The Lipsett area at the bottom of Thompson Mountain,

does provide some opportunity for gentle harvesting, approximately 25 to 30 per cent of the annual volume, Smith said.

Smith is looking at single-tree selection and sensitive thinning (removing diseased trees) in the Arrow Mountain region.

"Although we'll be doing some single-tree selection, some of these kinds of trees we'll have to protect for wildlife," he said.

The corporation was also considering negotiating with the government to maintain a hiking trail on the mountain in exchange for logging at the top.

However, based on comments at the meeting, the corporation has decided against logging around the lakes at the top of the mountain since the public wanted them protected.

"Leave lakes on Arrow Mountain undeveloped," one attendee wrote. "We need wildlands . . . We need to sense that we may be the first through an area even if it is an illusion."

The corporation is also considering some advice from Lister resident Terje Munkerud.

He made the only relevant comment toward the CVFC's forest plan and suggested winter logging.

"It's an issue of soil disturbance," Smith said. "We don't want soil disturbance either so (Munkerud) suggested if you're going to be ground skidding, do it in the winter."

Near Big Bear Creek and southwest Arrow Creek, some harvesting for specialty forest products such as hemlock is being considered.

See "Arrow..." on page 16.



Smith

The Valley

Arrow Creek timber harvesting said inevitable

Continued from page 3.

The approach the CVFC plans to take is logging the less-contentious areas first and proving to the community its abilities in gentle forestry.

"Talk is cheap," Smith said. "Here we are at the start. Don't believe us. The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

"What I'm hoping is once we begin logging, if we can

perform the way we want to, it will alleviate the fears and build some trust in what we can do."

However, Smith emphasized that Arrow Creek will have to be logged eventually.

"We've got to face the issue," he said. "The Forest Service may allow us to concentrate in other areas for a short while but if we submitted a forest plan without Arrow Creek on it, they might say, 'Aren't you con-

centrating in other areas to the detriment of other values?'"

The licence, which mandates an average of 15,000 cubic metres a year for 15 years, was issued in 1997. The CVFC is planning to cut 30,000 cubic metres in 1999 and 22,500 cubic metres in 2000 before tapering to the annual 15,000 cubic metres in its third year of operation.

"Next year, when we get rolling, we could legally cut

45,000 cubic metres," said Smith, explaining the annual cut is retroactive to 1997.

Overall, Smith found the meeting to be productive.

"I think the meeting — with the exception of dwelling on whether Arrow Creek should be logged — went reasonably well," he said. "What I'm hoping is people who weren't there and have a concern will drop in and see me."

The public will be asked to

provide input again once a draft plan has been created, which is expected by the end of August.

"The issue isn't anymore are we going to be logging Arrow Creek. That has already happened," Smith said. "To roll that over and over is a waste of time."

"The next question has been answered and that's who is going to be logging it. Now the next questions are how and when."

more opinion line

Rallying Creston Valley citizens to bring watershed logging plans to a halt

To the Editor:

Fully realizing it is my fault for not taking the time to keep up with things as a proper citizen should do, I feel I must voice my opinion on the subject of logging our watershed.

I have spoken to a number of people on this and they are as upset as I am. I have also been told it is a done deal. Well, if there are as many people as I have seen there must be some way to change this.

I have been told the Erickson Improvement District is against it. It is my understanding our representative, Elvin Masuch, is against it. But there are not enough votes at this new committee who are to run the new area passed by the province as under their jurisdiction.

As you can tell I am a novice at the logging and lumber business, but I am a citizen who has lived in this valley since 1981 and one of the reasons we moved here was the quality of water.

It is my understanding most of the committee carrying this vote to log are not loggers, either, and this concerns me greatly. To hear our mayor and health representative have voted for this is beyond my comprehension.

The necessity for our high standard of water is obvious

— Columbia Brewery and fruit growing.

It is also my understanding that there are other mayors in the Kootenays who have more than one real industry like us who have flatly stated and moved at their meetings that there will be no logging in any watershed that affects their drinking water. It is also my understanding that there are many, many watersheds ruined in the Kootenays when they were also told no problem.

I also know this committee has hired Jim Smith as their manager — a good move (if you have to log a watershed). I have met Jim and find him to be very honest and open. He has given me information and has offered to come out

to any of our homes and explain why he thinks it will be safe. I do believe he is one of the most knowledgeable men in the industry.

But I am still sorry. I do not feel they should touch the watershed. Jim has said he will not allow any loggers in the watershed if he feels there could be a problem. I believe him. But this has been said before by others in other watersheds, I'm sure.

Don't get me wrong. I am not trying to muddy up the waters (a little pun), but look around you; there are a lot of trees out there and I don't think J.H. Huscroft Ltd. or Wynndel Box and Lumber will close their doors without logs from our watershed.

I know if I worked at the

brewery or had a good fruit farm, I'd scream.

They say this is done. Well, I for one am sick and tired of being told by any level of government that it can't be changed. This is still supposed to be a democracy and if enough of us got together, well, we sure should be able to make a small change.

What do you say, citizens? It's our drinking water these mills want. Phone your representative, phone the mayor and write a thousand letters to the editor.

Dick Haswell
Creston

Pick of the crop

To the Editor:

On behalf of the Truscott-Snow cherry picking crew of Creston Orchards:

We came from all over the world to harvest your beautiful fruit and visit your valley.

We are off to see more of the world and study how we can make it better.

When our lives and travels took us to your town we encountered your smiles and kindness. We wish to thank you so much, but words are not enough.

We will forever remember.
Pauline Cronin
Oliver

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Forest company to hold first AGM

By Shauna Lowry
Advance Staff

The Creston Valley Forest Corporation is about to embark on another first.

The fledging company, incorporated June 12, 1997, plans to hold its first annual general meeting in mid-September, although a date hasn't been confirmed.

"There will be a review of the year of course," CVFC president Bob Griffith said. "The major items will be the election of the five directors not appointed by shareholders."

The 10-member board comprises five shareholders appointed to two-year terms and five directors elected to one-year terms by the shareholders.

"We're trying to get it set up so there is a rollover for consistency," Griffith said.

"After that there will be a discussion of where we've been and where we're headed for the next year," Griffith said. "I think it's been a very exciting year for the corporation. We've done a whole lot of things."

"We've gone from non-existent to being an operating company, we've hired a general manager, Jim Smith, and we have been doing our initial surveys and fact-gathering exercises that we have to do for our planning. That's well underway."

Griffith is pleased with the progress the corporation has made during its first year.

"We're starting to see some very real possibilities of where we can work and what

CVFC CURRENT BOARD

SHAREHOLDERS

Bob Griffith
(Creston Area Economic Development Society)

Ray Marriner
East Kootenay Environmental Society

Joe Pierre
Lower Kootenay Band

Lela Irvine
Town of Creston

Tom Mann
Regional District of Central Kootenay

DIRECTORS

Elvin Masuch

Ralph Moore,

Jack Gwartney

Gary Boyden

John Kettle

we can and can't do," he said. "Hopefully we're going to have some plans ready to submit to the Ministry of Forests this fall so we can get the necessary permits to actually start some harvesting by next summer. That's our goal."

All CVFC meetings are public, including the AGM.

"The public is always welcome at our meetings," Griffith said. "We do hope that they do take part in the public information meetings we have."

A information session was held July 27 to gather input about proposed harvesting of the CVFC community forest licence.

"We'll be planning some more down the road as we get things ironed out," Griffith said.

"The corporation appreciates the understanding and support the public has given them over the past year and we hope that we can continue to earn that support."

"Hopefully we're going to have some plans ready to submit to the Ministry of Forests this fall so we can get the necessary permits to actually start some harvesting by next summer. That's our goal."

more opinion line

Accepting community forest licence is to give up best means of protecting the water supply

To the Editor:

In Andy Shadrack's letter Sept. 24 regarding his support for the Creston community forest licence, he overlooked a very important option for control of the Arrow Creek watershed for the greater Creston community.

There is, and has been, an important provision under the provincial Land Act for communities to obtain long-term leases to control resource activities on Crown lands. From 1908-1970, the Land Act provided water supply organizations the right to obtain a 999-year lease of Crown lands for the purposes of water supply protection.

For example, in 1927, the Greater Vancouver Water District obtained complete control over Crown land within its watersheds through 999-

year leases.

In addition, the Greater Vancouver watersheds were protected under a special provincial act in 1930 to prevent mineral exploration, mineral development, and placer mining in the watersheds.

In 1940, the Creston Board of Trade was almost granted the same Land Act provision for Arrow Creek. In April 1970, the East Creston Irrigation District applied for a long-term lease of the Arrow Creek Crown lands, which the government subsequently denied.

Other districts, such as the Sunshine Coast Regional District and the City of Kimberley, once in 1974 and again in 1996, have also applied for long-term leases on their watersheds, applica-

tions which have also been denied by our provincial government.

For 27 years, through numerous public processes, constituents of the greater Creston area have kept logging out of the Arrow watershed. In a slick turn of events, the Ministry of Forests has "awarded" a community forest tenure licence agreement to Creston, thereby precluding the option of protection under the provisions of the Land Act.

By doing so, greater Creston is now forced to provide logging plans in a contentious and highly sensitive area — its water supply — and will itself now become responsible for all liabilities that may be incurred over the long term as a result of those logging activities.

A long-term lease arrange-

ment under the Land Act is the best solution for improvement districts and regional governments to secure protective tenures over their water supply watersheds.

That, coupled with a "no staking" reserve under the Land Act or separate legislation to prohibit mining.

When it comes to community water supplies, there should be no compromises on water quality, and greater Creston should be extremely wary of accepting this new forest tenure.

One word of caution. The Greater Vancouver Water District was tricked into changing its long-term lease agreement in 1967 for a tree farm licence, which in turn

resulted in degraded water quality for Greater Vancouver residents.

That amending indenture to the 999-year leases held by the Greater Vancouver Water District became a provincial precedent against long-term protection for community watersheds throughout the province.

By accepting the community forest tenure currently being offered by the province, Creston residents will be signing away 27 years of effort and their ability to protect Arrow Creek for community water supply."

Will Koop
Co-ordinator
B.C. Tap Water Alliance
Vancouver

CVFC's hand forced — Smith

By Shauna Lowry

Advance Staff

It's not a matter of wanting to but having to log in Arrow Creek, according to Creston Valley Forest Corporation manager Jim Smith.

The decision marks a reversal of a pledge made by Smith and CVFC directors at a public meeting July 27 that the sensitive watershed wouldn't be logged right away.

"We weren't going to harvest in Arrow Creek until we had proven ourselves," Smith said. "(But) we found this damaged timber and we have to address it — either that or the B.C. Forest Service will address it."



Submitted photo

See "Clear..." on page 2.

Kootenay Lake Forest District timber officer Gord Grunerud inspects Arrow Creek cut block.

Local News

Clear cutting planned for Big Bear Creek area

Continued from page 1.

Under the community forest licence, the CVFC is under obligation to take action on damaged timber.

"(If left) it would represent some volume loss — it's dead or going to be dead," Smith said. "The trees that are broken and weakened are highly susceptible to mountain pine beetle attack.

"We don't want those (conditions to the point) where we have to take more drastic action. It's a bit of a sanitation (issue) and trying to prevent mountain pine beetles."

Blown-down and broken trees in Big Bear Creek, next to the Arrow Creek block, will be clear cut with occasional trees left standing. The Arrow Creek block will be harvested using selective logging.

"There will be no road building," Smith emphasized. "It will be done by long-skid with small equipment."

Smith wishes he had never found the damaged trees.

"I've been around long



Smith

enough that I realize we have to do something about it," he said. "It put me in a dilemma. I really didn't want to be logging in Arrow Creek.

"It came down to a professional call on my part. I had the forest service up there and they thought 'you better get in there and clear cut,' which I was not prepared to do."

Smith also said the logging is up above at a tributary which runs into Arrow Creek.

"Initially when we found that block we weren't all that concerned about it because we thought it was a tributary to Big Bear Creek," he said. "It turns out it leads to Arrow Creek but it's way up on the height of land."

Hydrologist Martin Carver and soil scientist Greg Utzig, both of Nelson, indicated in a report that they didn't see any



Submitted photo

Damaged trees like these near Big Bear Creek must be cut.

problems with such work in Arrow Creek.

"We're just not going off on our own," Smith said.

The majority of logging, expected to begin in August, will be on Arrow Mountain and in Big Bear and Okell creeks.

"Most of our harvesting this year will be single-tree selection with small equipment or horses and some cable logging," Smith said. "All the rest of the logging is going to be quite gentle."

Public input in to the CVFC's development plan will be accepted until the end of April. The plan will be sent to the B.C. Forest Service for approval, which is expected by mid-May.

Once approved, the required cutting permits are expected to be in order by mid-July.

"It's right on schedule,"

Smith said.

The CVFC board is also looking to start up a log yard in Creston.

"We are wanting to make wood available to any local businesses in the valley — that includes Wynndel (Box and Lumber) and (J.H.) Huscroft," Smith said. "Because it's a community forest licence, we want to make our timber available to anyone who has an idea for

using logs on the open market competitively.

"It's a bit of an innovative thing. We have a timber supply and a mandate to make wood available to the community."

The log yard would be modelled after the Ministry of Forests' log yard in Vernon, which Smith helped start.

"We're also advertising for loggers and road builders (locally) because we are wanting to hire locally," Smith said. "We are going to look at hiring some of the smaller contractors. We're looking to hire people who don't have a steady job with the major (licenceses)."

Despite the need to log Arrow Creek earlier than planned, Smith is still pleased with the CVFC's progress.

"I think what's happening is we are moving toward getting this plan finalized and getting into some logging," he said.

'Lose-lose situation'

By Shauna Lowry

Advance Staff

Logging in the Arrow Creek watershed is a catch-22 situation, according to Erickson Water Users.

"When you log a watershed, among the many problems that occur is increased turbidity," EWU chairman Russell Lahti said. "You get soil erosion and a lot of organic matter



Lahti

"(The Greater Vancouver Regional District) quashed the no-logging order and allowed logging in 1967 and now Vancouver water is terrible," Lahti said. "It's full of turbidity. It has

Carpe Diem Players

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

"I'll put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes."

Creston Area Forecast

"Initially when we found it block we weren't all that concerned about it because we thought it was a tributary to Bear Creek," he said. "It turns out it leads to Arrow Creek but it's way up on the right of land."

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NIGHT'S DREAM
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'Lose-lose situation'

By Shauna Lowry
 Advance Staff

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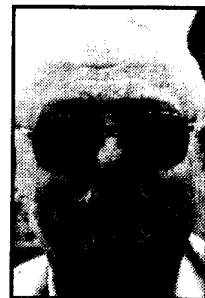
"When you log a watershed, among the many problems that occur is increased turbidity," EWU chairman Russell Lahti said. "You get soil erosion and a lot of organic matter.

"When that happens you have to put more chlorine in the water and when you put in more chlorine you get more problems — harmful byproducts."

Most research indicates that chlorine mixed with organic material forms trihalomethanes, which allegedly cause cancer.

"It's a kind of a lose-lose situation," Lahti said. "It's kind of a funny argument. If you log the area, it will cause these problems for the water supply and you have to chlorinate. I think that's how (the order) came up in the first place — there was a decision to log our watershed."

Lahti cited Vancouver's watershed, which wasn't logged between 1927 and 1967, as an example.



Lahti

"(The Greater Vancouver Regional District) quashed the no-logging order and allowed logging in 1967 and now Vancouver

water is terrible," Lahti said. "It's full of turbidity. It has too much chlorine in it."

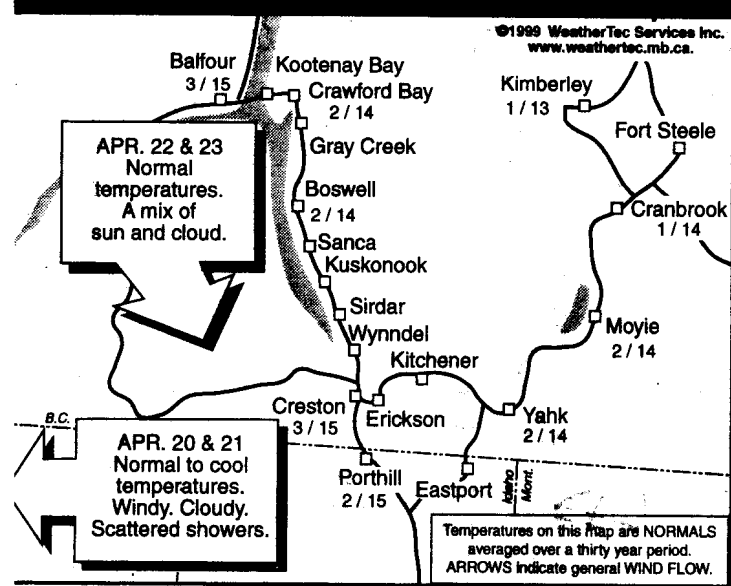
Although Lahti is against logging of any kind in the Arrow Creek watershed, he sees one ray of light in the situation.

"If there is any kind of less dark side, I suppose it's better that the logging be done by local people rather than big industry," he said.

The EWU's Operation Mayday Mayday is in full swing as it tries to block the May 1 introduction of liquid chlorine into the water supply.

"The EWU have been seeking legal advice and we are incorporating as a non-profit society," Lahti said. "We have been advised we have a very good legal position. In the long run we feel that we are going to have a water system without any thread of chlorine."

Creston Area Forecast



Monday, April 20 ... Cloudy skies. Scattered afternoon showers. Windy. Normal temperatures. Low 2 C. High 16 C.

Tuesday, April 21 ... Cloudy skies. Scattered showers. Windy and cooler. Low 2 C. High 11 C.

Wednesday, April 22 ... Sunny with cloudy periods. Normal temperatures. Low zero C. High 14 C.

Thursday, April 23 ... A mix of sun and cloud. Normal temperatures. Low 3 C. High 16 C.

Daylight on April 20 lasts for 13 hours and 59 minutes.
 Sunrise 5:45 A.M. MDT and Sunset 7:44 P.M. MDT

WeatherTec
 Services Inc.

METRIC CONVERSION To Change mm to inches divide by 25.	
C	35 30 25 20 15 10 5 0 -5 -10 -15 -20 -25
F	95 86 77 68 59 50 41 32 23 14 5 -4 -13

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Kootenay Lake Levels

For the benefit of Kootenay Lake residents, the following lake levels are provided by West Kootenay Power as a public service.

Levels for the week ahead are based on our best estimates, but they can change unexpectedly due to weather or other conditions.

DATE:	April 15, 1999
QUEEN'S BAY:	Present Level: 1738.4 ft. Next 7 Days: Down 0 to 2 inches
NELSON:	Present Level: 1738.3 ft. Next 7 Days: Down 0 to 2 inches
1998 QB peak:	1749.13 ft.

For more information on the lake levels or West Kootenay Power in general, visit our internet site at www.wkpower.com

Advance

VALLEY DRIVE IN

ADMISSION PRICES
 Adults \$5 • Students \$4
 Age 7-12 \$3 • Under 6 FREE
 Gates Open: 8:00 p.m.
 Showtime: 8:30 p.m.
 Movie Info Line: 428-2660

Watch Thursdays Newspaper for our Movie Listings!!

Check out our website for updated information..
www.crestonvalley.com/drivein/

Monday, June 5, 2000

\$1.00 (includes GST)

Valley Advance TV Magazine included in this issue.



Photo by Paul Frey

the future during Friday's grad ceremony.

fresh start, challenged

the gradua-
bit of edge.
ceded by
r's valedic-
which he
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ent way.

Walter urged his peers to strive for peace and be the leaders of a new generation. He told them to look fondly on experiences in the past and use them to chart a greater future.

Others also urged the 103 graduates to seek opportunity however it presents itself.

See "Promising..." on page 24.

Walkerton could happen here: doctor

By Rose Matjasic
Advance Staff

Concern over whether Erickson's untreated water supply could create the same kind of havoc as in Walkerton, Ont., is on the minds of key players in the ongoing local chlorination dispute.

"I sincerely hope that what has happened in Walkerton will generate some sense of urgency here," said East Kootenay medical health officer Andrew Larder from his Cranbrook office. "There has always been a possibility that this could happen here . . . which is why we took actions to have that water disinfected in the first place. All along

we've known the hazard. That's what we've been trying to avoid."

As of Friday, seven deaths had been attributed to drinking water contaminated by a lethal strain of E. coli bacteria in Walkerton — a town of approximately 5,000 — while approximately 1,000 residents had become ill.

"Right now there is a reluctance to believe that there could be a problem of such magnitude happen, but the community needs to know the risk is present," Larder said. "The people of Walkerton have learned that the hard way."

See "Debate..." on page 2.

Watershed logging must end: Masuch

By Rose Matjasic
Advance Staff

Erickson Improvement District chairman Elvin Masuch is ready to fight a battle against a "recognized threat" to the Arrow Creek water reservoir — community logging.

Masuch said Friday he will do all he can to stop logging in the watershed by the

Creston Valley Forest Corporation and other organizations, in hopes of preventing an outside source of possible contamination of the Erickson water supply.

Masuch's concern was sparked by the outbreak of a lethal strain of E. coli bacteria in Walkerton, Ont.

See "CVFC..." on page 2.

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See "CVFC..." on page 2.

Continued from page 1.

"What we can learn from the Walkerton tragedy is that our water is our most precious resource and above all we've got to protect that and protect our source above all," said Masuch, himself a direc-

tor of the CVFC. "Logging in the watershed has started to take place and we'd better take a good look at that. We have to stop all activity in the area and keep our water source pristine.

"Once logging happens are we going to destroy it (the

watershed)? It's a concern for Erickson and Creston. I fear for our water."

Water in the small Ontario town is suspected to have been contaminated during heavy rainstorms in the middle of May. Among the theories is that rain allowed manure which had been spread on farmers' fields to seep into the well water, allowing bacteria to enter the drinking supply.

It is known that the pump on one of three suspect wells stopped adding chlorine which would have killed the bacteria.

Another CVFC director, Ralph Moore, said Masuch's fear that light logging in the area could impact the community's water to the point of fatal contamination isn't only unjustified, it's "stupid."

"The logging that's been done in Arrow Creek has less chance of harming the water in the watershed than the E. coli in Walkerton can harm the water in our watershed,"

Wild Tree Notice

- Wild fruit trees are a serious detriment to commercial orchards. SIR staff are currently flagging wild apple and pear trees in the Creston area.
- Trees will be flagged with pink SIR tape and mapped. SIR staff will attempt to reach all owners who's properties have wild trees. Removal of wild trees will not take place without written permission of property owner.

If you have questions or would like to report a wild tree, please call 428-0277.



Debate over merits of boiling, chlorinating rages

Continued from page 1.

Although the cause of contamination hadn't been pinpointed, theories revolved around three deep water wells which may have been contaminated by animal feces following heavy rainstorms.

It has been determined that a pump on one of the wells stopped adding chlorine to the water supply.

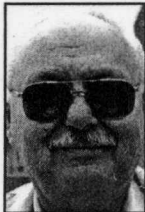
"The situation there is a little different than here," Larder said. "There no one knew the water was contaminated. Here we've had a boil water advisory in effect since 1990. All along we've been aware of the health hazard and my fear now is that, because people are uninformed about the specifics and because there is a lot of misinformation going around,

people will continue to ignore the boil advisory.

"But what happens when something does enter that source of water? Thank God it hasn't happened here yet... yet being the key word, unfortunately."

Erickson Water Users Society president Russell Lahti isn't taking the threat too seriously, however.

"We have a water source that is relatively pristine," he said. "Whether what happened in Walkerton could happen here isn't the (question). We have to appreciate the good water we have right



Lahti

now and do everything we can to protect it.

"What we have to be on alert for is that people may use this situation to further the use of chlorine in this area. They'll be ready to use (Walkerton) as a false argument for the use of chlorine. But using that as an argument just wouldn't be logical. They flushed their system with chlorine when they first knew there was a problem — before they told the public — because they trusted it would solve the problem, which it didn't. It gave them a false sense of security.

"It's not the end-all, be-all." Ralph Moore of the Water Action Group agreed, saying, "No, there is no threat here. People are going to panic and aren't going to be thinking clearly but this particular E.

"If this will get people boiling their water, then the tragedy there may prevent a tragedy here."

— Dr. Andrew Larder

But such confident claims haven't convinced Erickson Improvement District chairman Elvin Masuch that all's safe with the local reservoir.

"I fear for our water," he said, referring to contamination of any sort. "What Walkerton has taught us is that things like that can happen. We'll do all that we can to prepare ourselves for something like this until we have a long-term disinfection solution in place."

Larder just hopes "something will be done soon," not to protect the water specifically but the public generally.

"I really hope what has happened in Walkerton makes people sit up and think about what's going on," he said. "If this will get people boiling their water, then the tragedy there may prevent a tragedy here."

coli bacteria is exclusively related to cows. Every infection with E. coli in Canada and the States has originated in cattle. We don't have cattle in our watershed. You could win the lottery twice before we'll have E. coli in the water."

CVFC directors differ on impact in Arrow Creek

Continued from page 1.

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"We have to stop all activity in the (watershed) and keep our water source pristine."

— Elvin Masuch

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If you have questions or would like to report a wild tree, please call 428-0277.



said Moore, a member of the Water Action Group which has been opposing chlorination in the Erickson Improvement District. "Their water there isn't going to affect us here and neither is the logging.

"He's full of cow s---. Fine, he's full of E. coli number 0157:H7."

Moore said the risk of contamination from community logging is far-fetched because only four per cent of land included in the CVFC's five-

year licence is in the watershed, and the work — geared toward falling timber which has been destroyed by strong winds and other natural factors — has already been completed.

"It's already done," Moore said. "I don't understand where he thinks the threat comes in."

Meanwhile, Masuch is urging individuals to protect themselves.

"We realize that our water isn't disinfected and is susceptible to something happening like it did in Walkerton," he said, "so now the EID is doing what we can to educate the public on what they have to do — specifically, boil their water.

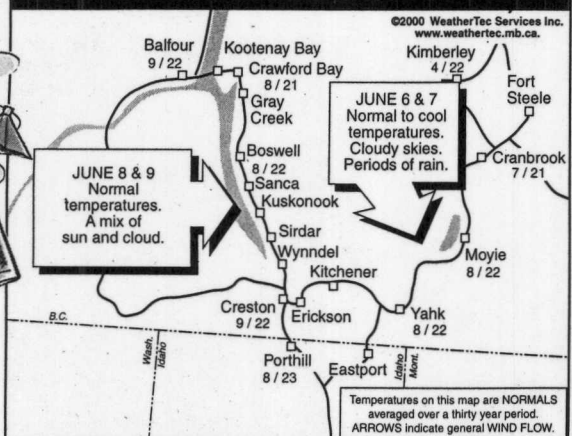
"What we've done to date is put boil water advisory display ads in the Creston Valley Advance, we've mailed advisories to every ratepayer — we'll be doing that in four-month intervals — we've installed boil water advisory signs on the welcome to Erickson signs on Highway 3, east and west of Erickson, and we're hand-delivering advisories to motels, campgrounds, mobile home parks... and restaurants. It's the oldest and most effective disinfection system there is.

"All other systems are prone to failure. That's why we need to make people aware of why they should boil the water."



Moore

Creston Area Forecast



Tuesday, June 6 ... Cloudy skies. Periods of rain. Normal temperatures. Low 12°C. High 22°C.
Wednesday, June 7 ... Cloudy skies. Periods of rain. Cooler conditions. Low 8°C. High 19°C.
Thursday, June 8 ... A mix of sun and cloud. Normal temperatures. Low 6°C. High 21°C.
Friday, June 9 ... A mix of sun and cloud. Normal temperatures. Low 8°C. High 23°C.

Daylight on June 6 lasts for 16 hours and 4 minutes.
 Sunrise 4:42 A.M. MDT and Sunset 8:46 P.M. MDT

WeatherTec Services Inc.

METRIC CONVERSION To Change mm to inches divide by 25.

C	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20	-25
F	95	86	77	68	59	50	41	32	23	14	5	-4	-13

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Community-Based Logging Gives Forestry "Soft Touch"

BY LUANNE ARMSTRONG

"You can stand in front of the bus or you can drive it," Ralph Moore says. Moore, an energetic, passionate man who looks much younger than his 55 years, is the architect of a remarkable community-based logging project in southeastern British Columbia.

About five years ago, a watershed near Creston called Arrow Creek was scheduled to be logged. Tempers flared. The community began to become polarized. Logging, especially in places that people depend on for drinking water, has caused a lot of hard feelings in B.C. over the past few years. In the Slocan Valley near Nelson, at a place called Perry Ridge, people have blockaded roads, been arrested, gone on hunger strikes in jail, and have even marched across the province, demanding that their water be protected.

Two local sawmills were vying for the project. When local environmentalist Tanna Patterson saw their plans, which called for extensive clearcutting in old-growth forest, she was appalled but wasn't sure what could be done to oppose them.

"I had seen what was going on in the Slocan Valley," she says. "I knew we didn't have the numbers to mount an effective protest. Besides, I've got kids. I didn't want to take the time to go to jail." So when Moore proposed that local groups organize themselves to apply for a community forest licence, she went along.

Moore, a local farmer and logger who's been involved in community environmental issues for decades, talked to every group in town, from the chamber of commerce to the rod-and-gun club. His vision and enthusiasm gradually won support from all sides. The Creston mayor and council, which had previously supported the mills' application, changed sides to support a broad-based community application. Eventually, everyone involved in the licence application, which now

includes the Town of Creston, the Regional District of Central Kootenay, the Creston Economic Development Committee, the Lower Kutenai First Nation, and the East Kootenay Environmental Society, agreed on a series of logging-management goals that included such green objectives as no burning, no use of pesticides or herbicides, and only limited road-building.

These five organizations were successful in obtaining a 15-year, "volume-based" community forest licence from the provincial government. They then formed a corporation—the Creston Valley Forest Corporation—with a unique goal: not to make money for shareholders. Any profits from logging would be put back into the community, earmarked for projects such as creating cross-country ski trails, bike trails, or other community-based forestry projects.

"We wanted a cooperative, but the other shareholders were used to corporations, so that's what we went with," says Ray Marriner. He sits on the CVFC board as a representative for the East Kootenay Environmental Society. "It must be the first time an environmental group is sitting on the board of a forest corporation."

The corporation needed some remarkable people to carry out their goals, and they found them. One is a registered professional forester named Jim Smith, who now manages the project. Moore, who had heard of Smith's pioneering ecological forestry work elsewhere, told everyone that hiring Smith was one of the keys to the success of this new project.

Smith is a modest man with a long history in the industry.

"I guess you could call me an ecoforester," he says with a laugh. "I learned about environmental values from my parents, and I've been trying to put them into practice through my whole career. The first thing we did for the CVFC was write a forest-development plan that was full of green goals

and green ideas. Then we hired an ecologist to look at all the different ecosystems. We wanted to base our management on the correct functioning of the ecosystem. We still don't truly understand forest ecosystems. They're so complex."

Conscious of the public scrutiny, Smith told a public meeting in Creston that the CVFC would "let our logging do the talking". "I told the community that talk is cheap. Don't trust us; performance is everything," Smith says. "I told them to watch us, be on our case, and see how we did."

In November 1999, the corporation hired a logging contractor named Bill Armstrong to undertake its first of several logging projects. Armstrong, a logger with 25 years in the industry, had been discouraged with his career to the point of considering quitting. He was tired of being labelled a bad guy. On his own, he'd developed ideas of ecological logging that he'd implemented whenever he was hired to log private land. He'd developed a good reputation as a careful guy.

So he was excited when this opportunity came along. Getting the contract required proving that he had both the knowledge and the

equipment to do the kind of "soft touch" logging, as he calls it, that the corporation required. Armstrong went to the extent of using a product called Amsoil, a synthetic-oil product, to prevent any petrochemical contamination of the watershed.

Armstrong says he owes much of his success in this project to "Jim Smith's ability to convey his decision to me and show me what the corporation wanted to achieve."

He likes being part of soft-touch logging. "The wildlife aren't disturbed," he says. "I still see squirrels, woodpeckers, ungulates, cougars. Everything is still functioning."

He's also glad that although he's logging in a community watershed, no one is angry about their water quality being ruined. "The water stays clear; the springs run freely."



Some of the techniques being used in the watershed logging include flagging every tree to be cut ahead of time so a "full canopy" forest is maintained. Although a few arterial main trails are established, many of the logs are skidded long distances through "ghost trails" that are constantly changed to prevent erosion and damage from repetitive skidding. There are no debris piles to be burned because the branches from the trees are left to compost naturally on the forest floor.

These kinds of techniques have been around for a long time, and there's also no question they can cost more money. On the other hand, there's no need for costly rehabilitation, stream repair, tree-planting, or habitat restoration.

After their first logging project was finished, Smith took Patterson and others on a walk along a skid trail in the watershed. He pointed out to her that the forest above the skid trail had been logged and the forest below hadn't been touched. She couldn't see the difference.

But despite the so-far sunny agreement in the community, the corporation has some problems to face. They've got a \$300,000 start-up bank loan to pay back. As well, their stumpage rates were initially set at a high rate by the provincial forest service. "Too high," Moore says. "They made a mistake. We can negotiate them down."

Having a volume-based licence forces the corporation to do more logging than it would like. In four or five years, Moore says, the corporation would very much like to turn its licence into an "area-based" community forest licence, which would remove the onus of having to meet an annual quota of wood to cut.

The corporation knows that it also has to continue to do logging that meets its own high standards, pays its costs, and demonstrates

how to be ecologically sustainable. It has set up its own logging sort yard so it can offer logs to anyone for purchase, ensuring access to timber for people such as small manufacturers and craftspeople.

But Moore isn't worried about the future. For him, this is the culminating project in a life dedicated to wilderness, environmental issues, and living carefully on the earth.

"We're going to change the paradigm," he says cheerfully. "We're trying to change the way industrial logging is done in B.C." Moore points out that with community-based logging, everyone wins, including the government and industry, although the logging industry is suspicious.

"The more communities see what we're doing, the more interest there is," he says. "We're becoming a movement to take back power over our forest resources."

However, he adds, community forestry is also really the only logical answer to solving the ongoing warfare in B.C.'s woods. Giving communities the ability to log in contentious, difficult areas such as watersheds gets the province off the hook for what might otherwise be perceived as irresponsible logging practices. Conceivably, it could benefit industry as well. "For example, they could buy exactly the logs they need," Moore says, "instead of having to take everything in a certain cut block."

Patterson agrees: "The communi-

ty forest licences allow the government to unload a hot potato in the lap of the community," she says. Although she says she still thinks that no logging in community watersheds is the best thing, this project has given her new hope. She'd like to see the community-forest-licence system continue to develop. "Give us some good land and we'll really show you what we can do," she says with a laugh.

In the meantime, Bill Armstrong and Jim Smith are busy logging a new site, which happens to include several goshawk nests. They've reserved 10 hectares around each nest, and they're carefully logging the remaining area, taking out single trees. So far, the goshawks don't seem to be worried.

"We've written the first chapter in a long story," Smith says. "We've learned we can do gentle harvesting; we can make the community happy. We've learned about selling logs. I knew we could do it if we could find the right loggers. We're trying not to alienate the major licence holders. I'm hoping other contractors will also work for us. People in the industry like the good feedback, and then they make sure things are done right. They want that recognition."

So far, it looks like everyone is winning. If this group has its way, it is conceivable that wars over logging community watersheds could end. That could only be a good thing for all of British Columbia. ■

up front

Hard Facts Needed on "Soft" Logging

Luanne Armstrong's article on "soft" logging in greater Creston's water supply overlooks important information ["Community-Based Logging Gives Forestry 'Soft Touch' ", May 25-June 1].

In the early 1970s, when the B.C. Ministry of Forests announced intentions to clearcut the water supply, residents put up a fight. Some citizens then sat on a government-appointed task force in the mid-1970s and were successful in putting the logging plans into a tailspin. After a moratorium on log-

ging for more than 20 years, the Ministry of Forests' district office again announced its intentions in the mid-1990s to allow logging.

Instead of demonstrating against the ministry's decision, a deal was made by local logger Ralph Moore to log the watershed at a slower rate. This was done under the auspices of a "community forest licence", which stipulates an annual volume rate of "harvesting". Ironically, forester Jim Smith, a member of the mid-1970s task force who was opposed to the logging, is now one of the architects for logging in the Arrow Creek watershed. And Luanne Armstrong, with her statement that this could end all of the current "wars over logging community watersheds", didn't mention that Bill Armstrong, who was involved in logging the first cutblocks in 1999, is her brother.

Who is kidding whom? The volume-based Creston "community forest licence" is already behind in its annual cut by about 40,000 cubic metres, and the corporation has invested hundreds of thousands of dollars to begin its logging operation, which means they have to recover their costs. Because a few people have made a deal to reduce the rate of logging, the pressures to log the watershed will only continue, and at great expense to the community.

Moore wants to change the industrial paradigm, which is a good thing, and so, theoretically, are community forest licences. But don't try to prove it in the public's water supply!

*Will Koop
Coordinator, B.C. Tap Water Alliance
Vancouver*

LETTERS

Watershed Logging Called Global Issue

Re: Luanne Armstrong's "Community-Based Logging Gives Forestry 'Soft Touch'" [May 25-June 1].

Protecting the Arrow Creek Watershed for the Creston Valley has been an issue for more than 50 years. A "reserve" was placed on this area in 1964. It was also declared a "health district". In 1970, this area was established for watershed usage,

LETTERS

and was in place until 1994, when a moratorium was removed, despite pleas from the community and local water-board chair Elvin Masuch. Reports that warned of the folly of logging in Arrow Creek were buried and a volume-based "community forest licence" was granted in 1997.

I would like to explode the myth of the community forest licence, which implies that the community will be a sort of "steering committee" that will hold its own best interests at heart. Clearly a ruse.

This community was told initially that the Creston Valley Forest Corporation wanted to earn our "trust". We were told in public meetings, and in the press, that they would not go into Arrow Creek until they had "proven themselves". Before we knew it Jim Smith was in Arrow Creek, logging two blocks above our water intake. The corporation tells us that the Ministry of Forests is forcing them to log Arrow Creek.

What, may I ask, is all this in aid of? We have a watershed that provides us with 6.5-million gallons of pristine water per day (during peak periods). Who knows who will need it, and when? This is not a local issue. If we do not begin immediately to protect our surface water by closing all consumptive watersheds, we may not survive. Water is essential to all life on this planet. I don't know where people think their water comes from. It was bad enough when we thought it came from the tap. Now, thanks to the destruction of our watersheds, people think that water comes from the supermarket.

Bonnie Boldt
Creston

more opinion line

Protecting our watersheds should be a higher priority

To the Editor:

The recent totally unnecessary boil order for the Creston water system is a good illustration of how determined Health Ministry officials (and other government bureaucrats) are trying to create a false sense of crisis in order to try to force chlorination of all B.C. water systems.

This reaction to the very different situation in Walkerton, Ont., could have been predicted by anyone who has had to deal with these bureaucrats for as long as the people of Erickson have been fighting to keep their water pure.

Dr. Andrew Larder's comments in the front-page article of the June 12 *Advance* quite obviously bear out the prediction from those of us who have dealt with him that he would be using the very sad situation in Walkerton — a town with a chlorination system — to try to somehow "advance" the cause of chlorination here (as illogical as that may sound).

While all media that I have been aware of have been focusing on what is the real problem in Walkerton — the pollution of the source of their water — Larder is focusing on trying to frighten the good citizens of Erickson enough to allow the chlorination of our water.

We, in the Erickson Water Users Society, have never opposed the treatment of our water, as insurance against the very slim chance that somehow a disease-inducing pathogen might get into the water.

We have merely opposed the simplistic, cheaper "solution" of adding the poison chlorine, which introduces new health hazards while adversely affecting the quality of the water.

If chlorine really would be

the most effective method of water treatment, that would somewhat offset its increasingly-apparent negative aspects. However, as the Walkerton incident and the Creston boil order illustrate, chlorination is no guarantee of pathogen-free water.

As a matter of fact, it is well-known that the most likely B.C. pathogens, such as giardia and cryptosporidium, are resistant to chlorination.

Why aren't the Health officials fighting for adequate federal and provincial infrastructure funding for a really effective, non-polluting water treatment system? And why aren't they against the logging

of our watersheds?

That, of course, is what is really behind this movement to chlorinate the whole province. ("OK, let's toss them a bone, but let's not spend too much on it.")

Logging in the watersheds will, of course, very adversely affect the quality and even quantity of our water. After the trees are gone, the cows can move in, etc., etc.

If Health officials are really concerned about our health I would think protection of our watersheds would be a top priority, but it obviously is not.

Russell Lahti

Chairman

Erickson Water Users Society

ADVANCE JUNE 12, 00

'Dismayed' by view of community logging

By Rose Matjasic
Advance Staff

Nelson-Creston MLA Corky Evans is speaking up against criticisms by Erickson Improvement District chairman Elvin Masuch about community forest logging in a local watershed.

"I am dismayed at his comments," Evans said during a conference call from Victoria on Thursday. "Community logging is causing no problems and I was shocked to read that in the local newspaper."

In a story published in the June 5 *Advance*, Masuch vowed to do all he could to stop logging in the Arrow Creek watershed by the Creston

Valley Forest Corporation and other organizations, in hopes of preventing a possible outside source of contamination of the Erickson water supply.

Masuch's comments came on the heels of the outbreak of deadly E. coli bacteria in the water supply in Walkerton, Ont.

But Evans said he was happy to see that the situation in the East was putting pressure on community figures to do something about the untreated water in Erickson.

"I guess events in Ontario have highlighted the risks of untreated water systems," he said. "I want to express my hope that this issue will be resolved, and fast."



Community control of logging: water users, VWS don't support the concept

"If you give up the opportunity of control because of dogma you're a fool."—Ralph Moore, environmentalist

"We don't accept community consensus if it results in hazards."—Ann Sherrad, Valhalla Wilderness Society

APPLEDALE—About 80 people showed up June 26 at a public meeting to talk about the possibility of the community taking over management of forests in the southern Slokan Valley.

The Perry Ridge Water Users Association refused to support the idea.

"We don't accept the risk," said spokesperson Marilyn Burgoon.

"Then all I can say is 'be part of the process'," replied Tom Gaines, a Community Forest Management biologist.

The meeting was called by Area H Director Don Munro to "develop possible strategies to ensure meaningful community involvement in future Crown land decisions affecting residents living on Perry Ridge and surrounding areas." This inaugural meet-

ing was a general discussion; future meetings will get into more specific and detailed information.

As well as Munro and his alternate, June McEwen, speakers included RDCK planner Dave Wahn, Leah Malkinson, Ian Hamann and Al Skakun from the Ministry of Forests, Susan Hammond from Silva Forest Foundation, Gary Boyden, manager of Creston Valley Forest Corporation's log yard for the community's forest licence, Ramona Faust from the Harrop-Procter Watershed Protection Society, Gaines and environmental spokesperson Ann Sherrad.

Munro said he had had a number of requests from citizens that he couldn't answer, and felt he has a responsibility to bring people together. The regional district "has no interest in assuming any legal or financial responsibility" for events on the ridge. He said he would be willing to work towards water protection, after someone pointed out that BC is the only province without groundwater protection.

Munro added he has "tried to keep away from special interest groups" and asked everyone to respect one another.

The Silva Forest Foundation worked with the Harrop/Procter community, one of seven pilot projects in the province and the first to have an eco-based flexibility. Silva's Susan Hammond explained the difference between a Community Forest Agreement, which is area based, and a Community Forest Licence, which is volume based.

A CFL licence has to cut the volume specified in the licence, with an annual allowable cut outlined in the permit. The CFA means the community can decide the boundaries of the area and how much wood to cut.

There is "no reason to think a lot of things couldn't be negotiated," Hammond said. "We need to think about it and talk to each other...we need to learn to talk to each other again, we need to trust one another again."

Asked if Silva could come up with plan, she said there was too much dissension and it would have to be worked out before they could do anything.

She added, "a Community Forest Agreement will allow us more control" but it is Crown land and they would still have to deal with government.

"Are we willing, ready and able to do it?"

Ramona Faust, of the Harrop/Procter Watershed Protection Society, said their CFA covers 10,600 ha. and the land and trees dictate their plan. "It allows us to manage for other values" including wildlife, water quality and recreation. Anything over a 60% slope is not on the table for logging.

The Creston Valley Forest Corporation was set up to handle that community's forest licence. Log yard manager Gary Boyden and his colleagues Jim Smith, Dr. William Mitchell-Banks (public perspective) and Ralph Moore (environmental community)

explained they received funding through economic development and the FRBC. The volunteer board is set up with a corporate structure, and had to borrow start-up money. A small AAC is set and they are required to meet the cut.

The CVFC received its first cutting permit in October last year for 15,000 cubic metres. The stumpage fees wound up being \$39.75/m³ instead of the anticipated \$25; it now owes \$265,000, including \$221,000 stumpage. This year it has a permit to log 36,000m³ and the stumpage is now \$17. Most of the loan will be paid off from these revenues. Hamann, MOF's Manager of Resource Operations, said they will start gathering information on road location, silviculture etc. for harvesting next year. Asked about water chlorination he said that, according to Health, all surface water should be treated. If there is damage to a consumptive watershed, a contingency plan would be put in place right away;

cont. on pg. 2

V. Voice July 6/2000

Local News

Evans pleased with community logging

By Paul Frey
Advance Staff

"Absolutely gorgeous logging, more like gardening than logging."

That was the reaction of Nelson-Creston MLA Corky Evans when he toured the Creston Valley Forest Corporation's community forest licence site in the Arrow Creek watershed.

The tour was an opportunity for the agriculture, fisheries and food minister to take a look at what the CVFC is doing with its licence and observe its logging practices.

Also present on the tour, which was closed to the media, were two members of the Kaslo community forest board and three from Harrop-Proctor's forestry board; both West Kootenay towns also hold community forest licences.

Also on the agenda was a discussion initiated by the CVFC about reducing the stumpage rates that communi-

ty forest licensees pay to the province.

In an interview, Evans said the talks revolved around how stumpage rates could be reduced to allow for better logging, such as increasing the skid so that less road-building would have to take place, and selective logging.

Evans said the CVFC suggested a system that would permit loggers to use a three- or four-kilometre skid, then write off those costs and eliminate road building in the watershed.

"This was a meeting initiated by all three community forests," said Jim Smith, manager of the CVFC.

Smith said community forest licensees such as CVFC have been asking the provincial government to look at the concerns since December. He felt the meeting with Evans was productive and hopes changes can be made to the stumpage appraisal system.

The CVFC currently pays

between \$16 and \$35 for stumpage per cubic metre in its various cut-blocks.

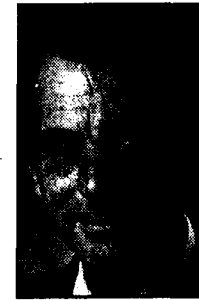
"We're trying to come up with a way that we could pay stumpage in a fair and equitable manner," said CVFC director Ralph Moore.

Moore said the discussion revolved around how community licensees could pay stumpage based on the price of logs, which they sell, rather than lumber, which only sawmills and forest companies sell.

The CVFC also suggested a system that would allow it to remove only 25 per cent of the forest cover, which Evans said is as much as 50-per-cent below the industry standard.

"(That) is very expensive, very fancy logging and they want that to be reflected in how they pay for the logs," Evans said.

"It was a very healthy discussion about changes that need to be made to accommodate beautiful work."



"It's environmentally beneficial. They're leaving the earth better than they found it."

— Corky Evans

Evans said the CVFC's practices, as he saw them on the tour, actually help the environment rather than harm it.

"I would say that it's the opposite (of what one might expect). It's environmentally beneficial. They're leaving the earth better than they found it," he said.

Moore, meanwhile, said the stumpage appraisal system rewards those who build roads by allowing them to deduct the costs from the amount of stumpage paid.

The CVFC wants to skid

logs farther rather than build more roads, which adversely affects drainage, among other things. Moore believes it's unfair for the CVFC to be penalized for logging in a more environmentally-friendly manner.

He also said the CVFC should refuse to pay stumpage in order to get the bureaucracy to listen to its concerns.

"I don't think they're going to take us seriously unless we get their attention by not giving them their money," he said.

Pilot project proves worthwhile to entrepreneurs

By Paul Frey
Advance Staff

An innovative pilot project at Kootenay Employment Services is helping people

start small businesses in the Creston Valley.

Teaching how to research ideas, establish business plans and sell the appropriate people on the ideas is the goal

One of the beneficiaries is Delilah Milne, who plans to open Butterfly World in May.

The operation would breed butterflies and possibly build up populations that are

endangered in other parts of the world. She will bring in the plants they would need as a food source.

Milne said the program was invaluable in giving her

the skills she needed to bring her idea to fruition.

"It gave me the tools to get to the end result I needed," she said.

"It got it to the point that

EKES working on chipping, composting plan

East Kootenay Environmental Society

Air quality is the prime focus for the Creston Valley branch of the East Kootenay Environmental Society.

Fired up by Pat Martin, the air quality committee is really smoking. Meetings are well-attended and members share a good feeling of accomplishment. The expertise offered by air

resources officer Garry Bell of Nelson has been vital and much appreciated.

The branch is working with Carl Kistner to set up a chipping and composting operation in the valley to help reduce backyard burning. A pamphlet is being sent to all valley residents on how to burn wood stoves most efficiently.

A road dust study is under way in which volunteers will

attempt to answer the question: what is in the air on the main street of Creston?

Members are also watching and reporting illegal burns.

The next air quality meeting is Jan. 16. Everyone who breathes is welcome.

Several blocks have been cut by the Creston Valley Forest Corporation in the community forest. The Sierra Club, Greenpeace and mem-

bers of the public are being invited to see how forestry can be done in an Earth-friendly manner.

Jim Smith, the community forest manager, is always happy to arrange a tour. Community forest timber is selling well at the CVFC log yard.

It is an opportunity for small businesses and community groups to take advantage of available, local

raw materials.

On tap for the next EKES meeting: *I Know What You Did Last Summer* slide show. The public is welcome to view hiking slides, slides of Germany and Harriet Wymyk's slides of people of the Northwest Territories at the Creston Valley Seniors' Centre on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.

Christmas cakes and cookies and herbal tea are a bonus.

increases both the cancer threat and the cost of treatment.

And chlorine does not protect against cryptosporidium or giardia, two of B.C.'s most worrisome contaminants.

Why isn't Larder providing residents with research into the alternatives to chlorine?

In his campaign for party leadership, Premier Ujjal Dosanjh falsely promised the residents of B.C. protection for their watersheds.

This same government appoints a former logger and heavy smoker to head the Health Ministry. Corky Evans is a signal that logging profits will come before health. His appointment was a green light to Larder to dissolve the EID.

As the threats to human health from logging and its cheap fix, chlorine, become better known, water management decisions are being moved out of the hands of communities. They are being put into the hands of politicians, not medical authorities or scientists or even MLAs who have a record of valuing health.

If the government cares anything about community health and clean water it should bring in someone who will work in a respectful and helpful way with the community to find solutions and alternatives to chlorine.

There needs to be a new Water Act to guarantee citizens' rights to healthy water.

The time is long overdue for the B.C. government to stop using its only option, chlorine, to find the best alternative solution for treatment, and to begin immediately protecting B.C.'s only remaining sources of naturally pure water.

Colleen McCrory
Green Party
Nelson

Evans equals profits before health

To the Editor:

A request by the Health Ministry for Minister of Municipal Affairs Jim Doyle to dissolve the Erickson Improvement District and appoint a receiver if it doesn't comply and implement a disinfection option by the end of December reflects the standard NDP policy of confrontation in community watersheds.

The EID is a local decision-making body that has worked for more than 70 years to provide clean, pure drinking and irrigation water. The EID's attempts to investigate alternatives to chlorine have met with resistance, arrogance and confrontation from the B.C. government.

The recent threat by Dr. Andrew Larder, medical health officer of the East Kootenay Health Services Society, to dissolve the EID reflects a dictatorial approach to water management.

EID trustees are elected by the local people, who drink the water, for the specific purpose of providing healthy water. Larder's action would give control to a political body, the regional district. This would put the regional district in a glaring conflict of interest as it is a partner in the company that is logging in the watershed and threatening water quality.

It is interesting that efforts to dissolve the EID are happening at the very time that logging is moving into the headwaters of the Arrow Creek watershed. The government is using chlorine as a cheap, quick fix for water wrecked by logging.

Because of this, it is blind and deaf to scientific reports that say chlorine causes cancer. It is also well-documented that water contaminated by logging requires higher amounts of chlorine, which

Smith disputes licence linked to water quality

By Paul Frey
Advance Staff

The Creston Valley Forest Corporation's plan to log the Arrow Creek watershed is running into opposition.

"It is incumbent upon the leaders of this province to protect the health and future of all citizens, and to stop industrial development in drinking water supplies, by ensuring the public's right to clean, pure water," said Will Koop, co-ordinator of the B.C. Tap Water Alliance, in a news release.

At issue is a renewable community forest pilot agreement the CVFC is seeking which would initially provide it with a five-year, renewable licence to log in the watershed. The alliance claims the agreement would eventually allow the CVFC a 99-year licence to log in the watershed, which it said threatens the safety of the drinking water supply.

The CVFC is five years into its existing 15-year, non-renewable licence.

Jim Smith, manager of operations for the CVFC, said the corporation doesn't intend to harm the drinking supply.

"We are not going to do anything that negatively impacts the water," he said.

The directors on the CVFC board are interested in protecting the water supply in the watershed, Smith said.

"Most of them are there ... to protect the water," he said.

While he admitted the CVFC would like to eventually have a 99-year renewable licence to log the area, that possibility is at least seven years away.

The initial five-year agreement is at least six months from being finalized, said Smith, who hopes that by proving the CVFC can log in a "gentle" fashion it would be

renewed for a longer term.

"(It) would have a five-year term but it's renewable ... it's a step-up process," he said. "All we've done is written a letter to the government to see if this agreement is acceptable."

Smith said there is no connection between the logging practices of the CVFC and the Erickson chlorination issue, as contended by the BCTWA. The CVFC "is as concerned about maintaining water quality as some of the local groups ... I don't agree there is a connection ... It's an absurd argument."

Approximately 8,500 of the CVFC's 12,000 hectares it is licensed to log is in the Arrow Creek watershed.

Koop said the government would not grant the new licence if it was serious about protecting water.

"If the premier is truly committed to the people of greater Creston, he will deny the request for a 99-year forest licence and immediately halt any future logging plans in the Arrow Creek," he said in the release.

Smith said that is the type of attitude the CVFC is working hard to change. But he admitted that strong opinions like those won't be altered no matter how well the CVFC works.

"More and more people are beginning to realize that yes, it can be done," he said. "You can have your cake and eat it too."

Smith disputes the BCTWA's view that "the Arrow ... has been a source of pristine water supply for 86 years."

According to Smith, a fire in the watershed in 1942 destroyed 8,500 hectares of old-growth forest, 17 per cent of which still hasn't recovered to 1942 levels, meaning water quality is still being affected by that fire.