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Issue 69, January 2010

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Endangered Caribou

The B.C. government has relaxed rules for mining exploration companies operating in endangered [mountain caribou](#) habitat.

Exploration companies are now allowed to build roads and cut trees without approval from the Environment Ministry or a caribou professional.

[Read the Vancouver Sun story.](#)

It's a double standard. Forestry



Transition Victoria Heats Up

Stuck in the January doldrums? Join – or start – a [Transition Town](#).

In the face of the gathering storm of global crises, Transition Towns focus on building a way of life that is [more resilient](#), more connected and more climate-friendly.

“Something very powerful is stirring and taking root the world over,” says Rob Hopkins, the co-founder of Transition Town Totnes (UK). “The scale of the challenge is huge, but there



Drying for Freedom

“Illegal direct action” usually means hard-core stuff like super-gluing yourself to airport equipment or [sliming officials with green custard](#).

But sometimes, hanging out your laundry is enough.

In many communities, hanging out your laundry for some solar care can get you harassed and evicted. Strata rules pack a powerful punch – witness [this cartoon](#).

Thankfully, the US-based

companies must receive a special exemption—following scrutiny by a caribou expert—before they can log or road-build in the same designated caribou habitat.

“We have one rule for forestry companies and another rule for mining exploration companies,” said Sierra Club BC Campaigns Director Susan Howatt. “B.C.’s antiquated Mineral Tenure Act must not be allowed to jeopardize the promising mountain caribou recovery plan that was announced two years ago.”

[A 2008 agreement](#) designated 2.2 million hectares in B.C.’s interior rainforest as critical habitat for caribou recovery, and put the land off-limits to logging and road-building. Only 1,900 mountain caribou remain.

Sierra Club BC is calling for reform of B.C.’s mineral tenure act to ensure that caribou do not lose more critical habitat to development. [Learn more.](#)

is an emerging energy to succeed, a sense of quickening.”

[Transition Victoria](#) – one of [nine “official” transition communities in Canada](#) – kicked off in style last August, with community visioning, neighbourhood presentations, film screenings, workshops and [more](#).

“The next step is to bring people together on specific local projects and begin to build a resilient, low-carbon Capital Region together,” says Patricia Molchan of [Sierra Victoria](#), which helped launch the Transition movement in Greater Victoria.

If you live in the capital region, join us for the [Open Space event on January 30](#).

[Drying for Freedom](#) and [Let’s Hang Out Canada](#) proudly raise aloft the (flapping) banner of laundry liberty. They advocate for laundry-friendly by-laws and raise awareness about the many benefits of the humble clothesline: from helping your clothes last longer to saving up to six percent of your annual electricity bill – and a tonne of carbon dioxide besides!

Thanks to their efforts, attitudes are slowly changing – [even in Alberta](#).

In Ontario, Premier Dalton McGuinty has been praised as a [laundry hero](#) for passing a bill that enshrines laundry liberty above strata and community by-laws.

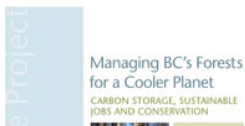
[Preview the trailer to the Drying for Freedom movie.](#)

Forests For a Cooler Planet

Logging trucks, they are a-rolling – through Cowichan and Nanaimo and the whole of southwest Vancouver Island, at a [pace that has not been seen for a decade](#).

Yet both wood-working unions and conservation groups agree: the path to jobs and carbon savings leads in the opposite direction. In January a coalition of labour and environmental groups, including Sierra Club BC, came out with a bold new plan to protect forests and jobs while fighting climate change.

[Managing BC’s Forests for a Cooler Planet: Carbon Storage, Sustainable Jobs and Conservation](#), a joint publication with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, calls on the BC government to conserve



Fish Justice



What can we do to improve the [health of our oceans](#)? Eating less seafood is a good start. Simply by taking less, we can allow the fish and shellfish a chance to recover, to rebuild their populations.

more forest, halt rampant wood waste and promote wise use of forest products — all as part of a concerted effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

[Read the press release](#) or watch the [Cooler Planet video](#).



The Globe and Mail called the report a “[remarkable feat](#)”.

“We have joined forces, post Copenhagen, to say that BC must lead by example with innovations that fully promote carbon storage in our forests and forest products,” says Ben Parfitt, the plan’s author and resource policy analyst with the BC Office of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Properly done, management techniques that maximize carbon storage both in our forests and forest products can go a considerable way to counteracting greenhouse gas emissions elsewhere in society. Such efforts can also create a stronger, more diversified and more sustainable forest economy.

The report advocates for a broad approach to managing our publicly-owned forest resources. It invites us to re-imagine forestry in BC, not through the traditional (and opposing) lenses of either maximizing human use, or maximizing protected areas, but rather, with a view towards maximizing carbon storage.

The report proposes a threefold action plan:

- Conservation: Conserve more forest and allow trees to live longer before they are logged;
- Halt waste: Limit wood waste and proceed with caution when using waste wood for energy.
- Durable products, long-term livelihoods: Count the carbon stored in wood products. Promote solid wood manufacturing for carbon storage and jobs.

The Cooler Planet report comes within weeks of the release of a [Sierra Club BC report on the state of BC's coastal forests](#) which found that decades of old growth logging have left an alarming 50 percent of all forest ecosystems on Vancouver Island and the South Coast at a high risk for species extinction and loss of carbon storage.

“We must quickly change the way we manage B.C.’s coastal forests to ensure on-going employment in a stable industry--based on sustainable forest management, increased manufacturing here at home and an end to raw log exports,” said Sierra Club BC Executive Director George Heyman.

Some species are so stressed from over-harvesting that there is already less to go around – and local First Nations communities suffer first.

“This year in the Great Bear Rainforest,” says [Caitlyn Vernon](#) of the Sierra Club, “I kept hearing about the crab fishery. First Nations watched all the recreational crab fishing boats setting crab traps all summer. But at the end of the summer, when the First Nations set their own traps, all they caught were females and juveniles. All the male crabs big enough to eat had already been harvested.”

First Nations have depended on food from the ocean since time immemorial. Their rights to [harvest food from the ocean](#) are protected in Canada’s constitution. We can respect these rights by taking less ourselves, through policy and personal choices, so that the First Nations can have seafood on their tables.



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Formed in 1969, [Sierra Club BC](#) is one of British Columbia's oldest and best-known



environmental organizations.



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