
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource
Operations

B.C. seeks feedback on Ancient Forest/Chun Toh Whud U Jud plan

PRINCE GEORGE – The Province is holding a series of regional meetings over the next two weeks to get feedback on a plan to preserve the unique ecosystems of the Ancient Forest, Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training announced on behalf of Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

The meetings will take place at:

- The Lheidli T'enneh band office, 1041 Whenun Rd., Prince George, on Oct. 8, 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.
- The Robson Valley Community Centre, 441 Columbia St., McBride, on Oct. 13, from 5 p.m. – 7 p.m.
- The Dome Creek Community Hall, Dome Creek, on Oct. 14, from 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.
- The Prince George Civic Centre, 808 Canada Games Way, Prince George, on Oct. 15, from 7 p.m. – 9 p.m.

The Province is also accepting email comments on the plan; send your feedback to ancientforest@gov.bc.ca before Nov. 2, 4 p.m.

In July, B.C. signed an agreement with the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation and the Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Society, a community-based conservation organization. The partners are working together to ensure the Ancient Forest – called Chun Toh Whud U Jud in the Lheidli dialect – is preserved and, in the long-term, designated as an official protected area.

The forest covers more than 12,000 hectares of largely unlogged temperate rainforest, and contains stands of giant red cedars, some more than 1,000 years old, as well as rare plants and lichens. The forest is 120 kilometres east of Prince George next to Slim Creek Provincial Park.

B.C.'s protected areas system helps preserve and maintain important natural, cultural and recreational sites. Protected areas include ecological reserves, provincial parks, conservancies, and designated recreation areas.

Quotes:

Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training–

“Protecting this rare rainforest is a community effort– not just involving our partners the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation and Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Society, but local residents as well. With a public engagement process now underway, I encourage everyone to participate and have their say as we work to preserve this very special place.”

Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations –

“We want First Nations and community partners to have a real voice in the management and protection of the Ancient Forest. The public meetings will make sure that everyone has an opportunity to be heard and help preserve ecosystems, wildlife habitat and cultural values of this remarkable ecosystem.”

Dominic Frederick, Chief, Lheidli T’enneh –

“Chun Toh Whud U Jud is part traditional territory of the Lheidli T’enneh First Nation, and we appreciate the community interest in helping us preserve this important part of our cultural heritage. We invite people from across the region to help us protect the natural splendor of the forest and continue to celebrate and honour it.”

Nowell Senior, president, Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Society –

“The ancient forest is a natural treasure and all of us need to work to help protect and celebrate this unique inland temperate rainforest. The public consultation process means we all have a chance to have our say and put our stamp on a plan to conserve the Ancient Forest for generations to come.”

Quick Facts:

- B.C.’s parks and protected areas system includes more than 1,000 protected areas, covering over 14 million hectares, or 14.4% of the province.
- There are more than 25 million hectares of old growth forests in B.C. Over 4 million hectares are fully protected, representing an area larger than Vancouver Island.
- Ancient Forest has three kilometres of trails – including a 500-metre wheelchair-accessible boardwalk – built and maintained through a partnership between the province’s Rec Sites and Trails branch and the Caledonia Ramblers Hiking Society.
- The forest’s western red cedars are some of the largest in the province, with trunks measuring up to 16 metres in circumference.

Learn More:

To read about Ancient Forest/Chun Toh Whud U Jud visit and review details of the plan to preserve its unique ecosystem, visit: <http://www.engage.gov.bc.ca/ancientforest>

To find out more B.C.’s parks and protected area designation, visit: http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/bcparks/aboutBCParks/prk_desig.html

To learn more about recreational sites and trails in the province, visit: <http://www.sitesandtrailsbc.ca>

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