

LETTER: Timber companies have had their day in the sun
<https://www.nelsonstar.com/opinion/letter-timber-companies-have-had-their-day-in-the-sun/>
From reader Nick Chatten

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Re: "Logging in watersheds — Nelson area logging companies weigh in" (Nov. 29)

Regarding the logging in watersheds, I advise everyone to have a look at the Google maps with the satellite view. Pan around the West Kootenays to areas like Nancy Greene park and you will see a lot of harvest. These guys have had their day in the sun and now they want to tip toe through people's back yards. When I was in the Selkirk College Forestry program in 1986 we learned of the fall-down effect. Slocan Forest Products (remember them?) learned this effect and now they are a memory. Eventually, the mature timber that can be put through a sawmill diminishes because they are logging so hard.

I have to laugh that the government considers we are logging in a sustainable fashion: utter hogwash! We are harvesting fiber faster than it can grow back. Those trees WAY up the mountain on higher elevations will need 100 years or more to come back.

These trees grew on shallow soils in a harsh environment. Sometimes they never come back, just a stunted, planted pine growing where it shouldn't. Fact is, the forest companies of B.C. have had their hey day in the 1980s and 1990s. Pope and Talbot (remember them?) were raking in record profits at the time. People always want the good times to go on forever. It didn't in Alberta's oil patch and it won't in the "managed" forests of BC.

Resource based rural communities better wake up and find alternatives to this reckless logging in people's back yards. Eventually the local mills will end up like Slocan Forest Products, a distant memory. Our West Kootenay trees just don't grow fast enough, those are the facts. A tree on the coast will grow much quicker because it has a longer growing season.

The continued routing of nature is not sustainable, no matter how many pie graphs the "professionals" hold up.

When nature is exploited for riches we all do well. When those riches are mismanaged, and they have been, then we are left with a denuded landscape, we all lose.

The water is brown and not drinkable, roads crumble down the mountain and the poor animals have to make do or move on. We also lose climate-wise because trees hold the carbon that is slowly choking the planet into a desert wasteland, endangering countless animals, including ourselves.

Change is in the air and I am glad people are finding their backbone with regard to logging in the watersheds. These forest companies and the province of BC have had it their way for far too long. Let's bring on the People Power!

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