

Saint John Protected Areas Strategy

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By: **John Calder**

The 19th century naturalist and philosopher Henry David Thoreau observed, "In wildness is the preservation of the world". Over a century later, on the eve of a new millenium, scientific observation assures us with absolute certainty the truth of his statement.

This brief report is written in support of the proposal to set up 4.3 % of this province as protected wilderness areas. New Brunswick has the poorest record of any jurisdiction in Canada for preserving wilderness areas. The present proposal represents a justifiable investment in our natural heritage and a modest pledge to our children and grandchildren.

We need to value the remaining places that are truly wild, where roads don't go, where our species can find solitude and where wild animals and plants can have relief from the pressures of human greed.

Our scientists will need unspoiled wilderness areas where they can continue to learn from the ongoing miracle of creation. As Rachel Carson observed about wilderness:

" Each time that I enter it, I gain some new awareness of its beauty and its deeper meanings, sensing that intricate fabric of life by which one creature is linked with another, and each with its surroundings...."

All those who love this province share a concern for jobs. We need to harness the creative power of our citizens to create a win-win situation for both the wilderness and our people.

We can create more jobs here in New Brunswiick producing furniture, flooring and other products from the harvested trees. So called "labour-saving technology", like herbicide spraying and mechanized harvesters, has not served our forests or our communities well.

To whom have the benefits of this technology gone and what is the true cost of these practices to our health, our environment and our communities? We rarely think of poetry and pulpwood as going together, but those who see an unharvested tree as a

wasted tree fail to recognize the crucial role of wilderness in the continuous process of creation.

We would like to give the last word to Gerard Manley Hopkins :

*What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.*

Dear Friends This is the submission we will be making, in writing, in Saint John this evening..

John Calder
RR #2 Clifton Royal
New Brunswick, Canada
E0G 1N0
phone: 506-763-2291
fax: 506-763-2389 or 2189