science & environment

Clearcut logging: the stump stops here

by Wayne Groszko

A 400 year old tree stump was in Halifax last week, from Saturday, October 1 to Wednesday, October 5. The 4000 kg stump was a red cedar tree growing in Clayoquot Sound, British Columbia, before it was cut down by MacMillan Bloedel during clearcut logging. The Western Canada Wilderness Committee pulled the stump out, and "Stumpie" has now been to Europe and across North

America, on a tour to raise awareness of the loss of Canada's ancient rainforests

Five members of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee travel with the stump. During their stay here in Halifax, they talked

with people at the Farmer's Market, TUNS, SMU, and Dalhousie, visited several schools, and gave a slide show and presentation on Wednesday night. Their goal is to make people aware of what we are losing when we clearcut old-growth rainforests, and to encourage peo-

ple to put

pressure

on Jean Chretien to protect Clayoquot Sound.

According to stump tour coordinator Cheri Burda, "Chretien promised before the last election that Clayoquot Sound, the largest intact area of temperate rainforest in the world, would be made a national park. He has now gone back on that promise, claiming that he cannot act without more pressure from Canadians on this issue. Well, we are going to raise awareness and pressure."

The stump campaigners emphasize that protecting Clayoquot Sound, and ending clearcut logging, do not have to cost jobs if done properly. "If more people knew that our tax dollars are subsidizing the destruction of this irreplaceable forest, they'd be angry," said stump campaigner Misty MacDuffee, "Jobs are lost because of mechanization, over-cutting, and the export of raw logs without any value-added. Pro-

patches of oldgrowth left has nothing to do with it." A poster gives an example of a forester who has been selectively logging his private land for forty years, without clearcutting. This mode of forestry has not destroyed

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the forest, and has provided stable employment for a lifetime, unlike the uncertainty and lay-offs facing workers in big corporate clearcut operations.

The stump campaigners call for the logging agreements with big companies to be terminated, and replaced with a locally managed system involving small forestry companies. They claim that there are hundreds of small, ecologically minded companies who would be quite happy to replace the likes of MacMillan Bloedel. In this way, they claim that the few remaining rainforests could be protected, clearcutting eliminated, and the number of forest jobs increased.

On Thursday, October 6, the Stump Tour left Halifax, passing through Wolfville and Yarmouth, to take the ferry to Maine. They will tour across the United States, reaching Seattle, and going home to Vancouver Island, sometime in November.

The NSPIRG has copies of a letter to Jean Chretien. If you wish to write to the Prime Minister, you can write your own letter or use one of ours. They are available at the NSPIRG office, Room 310 of the SUB, during office hours. (Phone 494-6662, email nspirg@ac.dal.ca). This article written with the support of Eco-Action. Contact NSPIRG if you want to volunteer with us.



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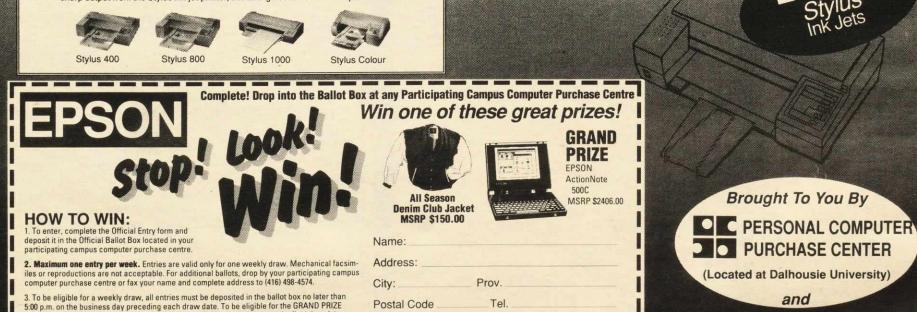
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