

Great Bear Rainforest Land Use Report (Sample)

The Great Bear Rainforest is a temperate rainforest on the Pacific coast of British Columbia, Canada. It is part of the largest coastal temperate rainforest in the world, and is one of the only areas that has not yet been spoiled by economic activity. It is home to many 1,000 year old trees, and species such as cougars, wolves, salmon, grizzly bears, and the unique Kermode ("spirit") bears. Many First Nations communities have depended on this area for thousands of years. When Europeans colonized Canada, logging, mining, and fishing operations began in the Great Bear Rainforest. The plants, animals, and communities in this area may now be under threat from these industries, and we must come up with a new land use plan for the Great Bear Rainforest.



Our land use discussions included representatives from the Forest Industry, the Coastal First Nations, and environmental organizations. I have heard many valid points and arguments from the various stakeholders involved in the discussions. It is important that we consider all perspectives when making our decision about land use in the Great Bear Rainforest. This unique ecosystem must be protected, and the rights and culture of the Coastal First Nations need to be respected. We also need to ensure that the BC forest industry can continue some logging practices, ensuring the employment and livelihood of many British Columbians. I believe that the current state of resource development is unsustainable, and threatens the plants, animals, and communities of the Great Bear Rainforest.



I propose that 80% of the Great Bear region be protected in order to restore and preserve important ecosystems. Specific areas that are crucial to the survival of Spirit Bears must be included in this protected area. Development of the remaining 20% must be sustainable. Clear-cut logging practices should be banned in this area. The Coastal First Nations need to be involved in any decision about this region in the future. Their communities should also receive 70% of the profits from any development. Several areas will be set aside for First Nations community use (harvesting of medicinal plants, areas for food, and traditional ceremonies). Tourist companies that are run by Coastal First Nations community members will be allowed to operate in this area, as long as they prove that their operations are environmentally friendly and sustainable. Any new tourist companies must receive approval. Any future decisions about the Great Bear Rainforest will be discussed by a panel of representatives from all stakeholders (government, First Nations, environmental groups, British Columbians, Forestry workers).

This land use plan is a compromise between all parties involved. It will help to protect this beautiful and unique area of our province and respect the rights of the Coastal First Nations, while also allowing for some development to support our economy and workers.