

## CRITICAL SPECIES IN GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST FALLING THROUGH THE CRACKS

### Groups say issuing of cutting permits is unacceptable until crucial species habitat is set aside

**March 5, 2010, (Vancouver, BC)** — Key species in the Great Bear Rainforest could still be at risk of extinction despite commitments in the internationally acclaimed conservation agreement for the region, say the three environmental groups who helped negotiate it with the province.

A new report by the groups entitled, “Slipping Through the Cracks? The Fate of Focal Species in the Great Bear Rainforest” released today by Greenpeace, ForestEthics and Sierra Club BC shows there is still a risk of extinction for a number of important species of conservation concern, including grizzly bears, marbled murrelets, mountain goats, northern goshawks and tailed frogs.

According to the organizations, the Province has yet to deliver the new species conservation measures that were identified as a priority by all stakeholders. With the current increase in timber prices, major forestry companies may soon be submitting logging plans without incorporating crucial information for key species habitat. The groups are asking that no new logging approvals or road permits be granted until crucial focal species habitat is set aside from logging.

“The Great Bear Rainforest Agreement was gold on paper but is dragging along in reality,” said Eduardo Sousa, forest campaigner with Greenpeace. “We are not seeing the progress required for a world-class standard for rainforest conservation”

The March 2009 Agreement required new scientific analysis to be in place by September 2009 as a way to determine if key species needed additional habitat for survival.

“When we announced the new Great Bear Rainforest Agreement we all agreed its success depended on meeting the long-term goals of ecological integrity and healthy communities, while ensuring in the short term that no important species fall through the cracks,” said Valerie Langer, Director of BC Forest campaigns at ForestEthics.

The new agreement announced a year ago included full legislation of 2.1 million hectares protected from logging, as well as new, transitional logging regulations, which when combined totals 50 per cent of the rainforest off-limits to logging. The Agreement also committed to achieve the goals of ecological health and high quality of life in communities by 2014.

“The province said that they are making an Olympic effort to achieve this bold and challenging initiative,” said Jens Wieting, forest campaigner with Sierra Club BC. “To live up to that we have to see real change on the ground for these species very soon or we will not make it to the podium.”

The report “Slipping Through the Cracks? The Fate of Focal Species in the Great Bear Rainforest” was released today by Greenpeace, ForestEthics and Sierra Club BC.”

The full report can be found here: [www.savethegreatbear.org](http://www.savethegreatbear.org)

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