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5TH SESSION, 37TH PARLIAMENT

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THURSDAY, MAY 13, 2004

The House met at 10:04 a.m.

[J. Weisbeck in the chair.]

Prayers.

Introductions by Members

G. Halsey-Brandt: It's my great pleasure this morning to introduce 18 very special guests from the city of Wakayama, Japan, who are visiting us here in Victoria. The delegation is lead by the chairman of the sister city committee of Wakayama, Dr. Iwahasi, and his wife. Mr. Ura is also representing the city as a city councillor. Wakayama and the city of Richmond have had a twinning relationship for 31 years now — very, very strong cultural ties between that part of Japan and the city of Richmond going back over a hundred years.

[1005]

We have a delegation of students as well, particularly with J.N. Burnett Secondary School, who are presently in Richmond with their homestays. So they're in Richmond, but this delegation is here this morning to tour the Legislature building and see us in action. They'll be going back to Richmond this afternoon and all day tomorrow. Would the members please make them welcome to the Legislature.

G. Hogg: A longtime and getting-older friend is in the precincts today. She is a member of the Semiahmoo band council and is here doing some work on behalf of them and on behalf of herself. I wish the House would welcome Sharon Charles.

Orders of the Day

Hon. S. Santori: I call second reading of Bill 51.

Second Reading of Bills

WILDLIFE AMENDMENT ACT, 2004

Hon. B. Barisoff: I move the bill be read for a second time now.

The amendments contained in this bill provide greater clarity concerning the government's ability to designate and protect species in British Columbia. The term "species at risk" as defined in the amendments includes any animal, fish, plant or other species that is designated by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council as endangered, threatened or extirpated.

To effect this definition, the amendments propose changes to the definition of wildlife to create a clear division between how wildlife and species at risk are addressed under the act. The authorities currently set out in the act concerning hunting, trapping, angling and guiding will not be affected by these changes.

Once species are listed as endangered, threatened or extirpated, this bill contains a series of prohibitions

that will automatically apply to individuals of listed species. These concern the killing, harming, import, export, possession, sale and transport of the species. These largely affect prohibitions and permitting powers that already apply to the wildlife as defined in the act.

In addition, the amendments enable prohibitions against damaging or destroying the residence of species. The definition of residence with respect to the listed species and the application of residence protection requirements to particular species will be enabled by a new regulation-making authority that will be exercised at the discretion of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

The application of the proposed regulatory authority in relation to the species will be informed by the best available science concerning the protection and recovery of species in the province, and by full consideration of socioeconomic implications and the importance of providing certainty to landowners and land users. The amendments to the Wildlife Act that are proposed in this bill will reinforce and clearly assert the provincial government's powers to protect and recover these species.

B.C. already has a support network for managing wildlife resources that is second to none. These amendments complement our existing Wildlife Act, our world-renowned parks and protected-area system, land use plans, environmental assessment processes, partnerships with industry and conservation stakeholders. Together with other legislation that addresses species at risk, such as the Forest and Range Practices Act, these amendments will provide the province with the necessary tools to address the protection and management of species in the manner that makes sense from the British Columbia perspective. These amendments will provide certainty regarding the protection and recovery of species in British Columbia by enabling the province to retain the lead in addressing these issues in a manner that provides certainty to landowners and land users.

British Columbians expect an appropriate balance between the protection of wildlife resources and sustainable economic development. The amendments give the province the tools to protect B.C. interests to provide certainty for our species and certainty for our landowners. Like our federal counterparts, we will take a measured approach and be clear in our understanding of the environmental implications and the socio-economic implications of listing species.

Hon. Speaker, I move second reading.

[1010]

Motion approved.

Hon. B. Barisoff: I move the bill be referred to a Committee of the Whole House to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

Bill 51, Wildlife Amendment Act, 2004, read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole

House for consideration at the next sitting of the House after today.

Hon. S. Santori: I now call second reading of Bill 50.

PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS
STATUTES AMENDMENT ACT, 2004

Hon. B. Barisoff: I move the bill now be read a second time.

I'm pleased to speak to this bill, which will amend both the Protected Areas of British Columbia Act and the Park Act. Through this bill, British Columbia is demonstrating its international leadership in the establishment of parks. We have a world-class park system to truly be proud of. This government's goal is to continue to make the system even better, and this bill carries on that work. The bill permanently protects more than 150,000 hectares of new parks and ecological reserves for British Columbia by establishing 28 new class A parks and one new ecological reserve and adding to 31 existing class A parks and four ecological reserves.

Many of the new parks contained in this bill were identified for protection through land use plans. In fact, 14 new parks have resulted from the Kalum land and resource management plan, eight from the Okanagan-Shuswap land and resource management plan, and one from the Fort St. James land and resource management plan. Also, a number of parks and protected areas have resulted from the various private land acquisition arrangements, often in partnership with industry, non-profit groups and foundations.

As a result of these private acquisitions, this bill establishes one new ecological reserve and two new parks, and makes additions to four ecological reserves and 29 parks. The bill also transfers 12 protected areas that were established under the Environment and Land Use Act to class A park status and includes them in schedules to the Protected Areas of British Columbia Act. This transfer will increase the protection of these areas.

The creation of the new parks in this bill supports sustainability in our economy. Parks benefit small business, encourage new investment in recreation and tourism, and help diversify local economies. We want to strengthen and expand the economic benefits for our communities located near our provincial parks.

Last September the Premier committed to the UBCM that we would consult with them before designating any new parks. Some local governments said that adding new parks at this time would create a level of uncertainty. One example is the Okanagan-Similkameen regional district, which may be home to B.C.'s next national park. The regional district has asked us to wait until we know how this proposed national park is going to affect their communities before designating any new provincial parks in that area. We take the concerns of local governments seriously, and while we're expanding our park system signifi-

cantly today, where there are local concerns, we have elected to wait.

This bill also replaces the metes and bounds descriptions for a number of parks with new map descriptions. These map boundaries are more accurate, understandable and practical to use in the field. These maps are a reference to schedules to the act and will be kept at the Crown land registry to ensure their accessibility. A set of maps has been provided to the office of the Clerk of the assembly for those members who would like to review them.

Hon. Speaker, in six years British Columbia will host the 2010 Olympics, something we can all be proud of. As part of its commitment to the 2010 Olympics, the government will be making improvements to the Sea to Sky Highway. This bill will make boundary adjustments to two parks, Brandywine Falls Park and Porteau Cove Marine Park, as part of this project.

The last amendment this bill makes to the Protected Areas of British Columbia Act will remove two provincial parks, Andy Bailey and Testa River, in the Peace region. These two parks will be transferred to the Northern Rockies regional district with their authority and will be established as regional district parks.

[1015]

Finally, this bill makes an amendment to the Park Act. A new provision will be added to enable ministers to enter into collaborative agreements with first nations, various levels of government and others. The authority will lead to improved opportunities for partnership and working relationships to better manage our wonderful park system.

Hon. Speaker, these amendments are significant to step up my ministry's work to open up our wonderful park system and make it even better. They support this government's commitment to ensure high-quality management of parks and protected areas, to ensure that these areas benefit all British Columbians.

The Premier committed to opening our parks to people. British Columbia's parks benefit small business, encourage new investment in recreation and tourism, and help diversify the local economies. We're bringing our best in B.C. by preserving these special areas.

I move second reading.

J. MacPhail: Mr. Speaker, good morning to you. Good morning to everybody. It's 10:15, and God knows we're plowing through legislation like we've never seen before — legislation that was introduced less than 24 hours ago. Here this government is ramming through two pieces of legislation that nobody's had a chance to even look at.

This government has.... I'm not even going to dare say they have a vision. They don't even have a legislative agenda. They definitely don't have any vision.

Here we are — 10:15, Mr. Speaker. The House collapsed last night because this government has nothing to debate. We've already rammed through one piece of legislation — Bill 51, the Wildlife Amendment Act. Oh, the government says: "Trust us." That's what we're

supposed to do on both these pieces of legislation — Bill 51, the Wildlife Amendment Act, and now Bill 50 — what we're debating at second reading — the Parks and Protected Areas Statutes Amendment Act.

I dare any government Liberal MLA to get up and say they've read this legislation. I dare one of them to suggest that they've gotten up and read the legislation.

It is shameful, Mr. Speaker. What's this government embarrassed about? What are they hiding from? They introduced legislation 18 hours ago — 18 hours ago, Mr. Speaker — and they're ramming it through now. "Trust us."

This is a government that shoots grizzlies before they can accurately count them. They cut down spotted owl habitat before knowing how many there are. They build ski resorts and don't worry about the mountain caribou. They shoot golden eagles to save the marmot. They delete parks; they change park boundaries; they take things out of the LRMP processes by legislation without letting anybody know. They're ramming the legislation through, because they don't want their record examined.

You can't even take a moment, Mr. Speaker. We in the opposition can't even take a nanosecond to walk from the ground floor to the second floor of this chamber. If we don't run.... They've passed legislation.

Deputy Speaker: Member, take your seat, please. Member, the bells rang at 10 o'clock this morning to summon individuals to the House. You had ample opportunity to get here to speak to the first bill, if this is what your complaint is. I think your argument is unfounded.

Proceed with Bill 50, second reading.

J. MacPhail: Mr. Speaker, I'm a bit taken aback by your remarks. Under what order do you say that to me? Under what point of order is that? I'm not challenging you. It does seem to me, though, that you are engaging in debate. What point of order is that?

Deputy Speaker: Member, you are criticizing the procedures of this House. I'm not debating that issue; I am merely making a point. The fact of the matter is that you were complaining about the fact that you missed speaking to the first bill. You had ample time to get to the chamber, and you obviously didn't arrive here in time.

I ask you now to proceed with the second reading of Bill 50.

[1020]

J. MacPhail: Thank you for the clarification. That wasn't my point at all, but thank you for the clarification.

This is the only business that this government is doing this morning. The House sits from 10 a.m. to noon. I assumed, given the fact that the government introduced these bills only yesterday, that some of the government members would be speaking to it. That

was my point, not that I missed the debate. They'll live with that.

I don't have to prove my record in this legislative chamber at all — not for one iota. It's the government caucus members who allow this House to ram through legislation without an iota of debate. That was my point. In nanoseconds, they rammed through legislation. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to clarify that point. They vote for legislation that they haven't even read, which they refuse to debate. That's my point. I stand in this House with pride in my colleague from Vancouver-Mount Pleasant's and my record on debating and holding this government to account.

So what do we have here? Wildlife Amendment Act. We've got the Parks and Protected Areas Statutes Amendment Act. Well, we can sure bet that based on this government's past record, they don't care a whit about protected habitat. They don't care a whit about parks. We have government caucus members out there every day complaining about parks and how awful it is that the previous government protected 13 percent of the land base in parks. We have a government here that's promoting commercial development in their parks. We have a government that doesn't care a whit about contaminated sites, whether they be on Crown land or not.

We have a government that actually has a minister — the previous Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection — who didn't see her job to be an advocate for the environment at all. Her job was to work to make sure that business wasn't impeded by the environment. Then we have a current Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection where the business community has said outside of the province, "Thank God we've got a new, more business-friendly Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection" — and this government takes pride in that.

Well, isn't it shameful? A legislative agenda that has petered out to absolutely nothing. The highlight of their legislative agenda is to attack working people, to erode the environment, to bring in legislation that helps business, and this government sits silent. In 20 minutes of a House that's to sit for two hours, that's what they do.

Well, who knows what's in this bill? I've had a cursory glance at both of them. Now, thank God there are rules of the House that don't allow them to ram through this legislation this afternoon, because God knows they have hardly anything else to do. They won't bring the Premier in here. So thank God they can't force it through later today. We at least can give the public a chance over the weekend to look at this legislation. And believe you me, Mr. Speaker, there will be many questions when we are at committee stage on this legislation.

B. Suffredine: I rise in support of this bill, and I'm a little puzzled by the remarks of the Leader of the Opposition. I don't know whether she forgot her glasses this morning, but there are only four sections in this act. It doesn't take more than about two minutes to

read them, and they speak of governments being able to work out local agreements for management of parks with things like native bands, local governments and....

[1025]

Interjection.

Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Order, please.

Interjections.

Deputy Speaker: Order, please. Member, you had your opportunity to speak.

B. Suffredine: Thank you for the opportunity.

For the edification of the member, it's a large document. It lists a large number of parks, and I think we should be proud of the fact that we're creating a large number of parks in British Columbia. The member tried to argue that they had protected 13 percent of the land base. No one is critical of creating parks where parks are appropriate.

I was pleased to see — and I can only pick out a couple of examples from the voluminous list — that, for example, right near where I live in Grohman Narrows, probably just about five miles from where I live, there is a small ten-acre parcel that's being set aside because that's a special area to people in the region. It's been carefully selected as an area that people will value and protect. These recommendations don't come out of the air. I've seen proposals from park officials who work in a dedicated way. They look at potential opportunities for areas that the public use on a regular basis and that we want to preserve as long-term benefits for communities.

What the member probably took offence at is any suggestion that protecting large tracts of land without necessarily doing the scientific work and potentially affecting people's livelihoods by setting aside large tracts of land is something that is inappropriate. I candidly and openly say that in my region, where there are about — at least there were up until today — 750,000 hectares of protected areas, work should be done to make sure that when we're going to set aside areas and use them for parks or protection, we've carefully thought that out. We know what the impact will be on communities, and we've selected those areas that have specific wildlife values and specific values to the public if they are used for recreation.

In looking at the list, I see there is a six-hectare parcel in Christina Lake now designated as Christina Lake Park. I know that's a widely and publicly used area and that a very small piece of land is needed for public use there. I see there is a really large park set aside in the Bugaboos called the Bugaboo Park — 13,646 hectares, which is also in the list.

I think the lady doth protest too much. There's just a list of parks that goes on and on and on. I say there's nothing but something to be proud of here. We're actually moving. The minister has taken the step of saying

that these are areas that have been under consideration for many years. Consideration of them began by park officials long before we were elected to govern this region. The minister is acting on it, following through on many years of review by park officials. There is nothing to be ashamed of and everything to be proud of in the provisions to be gained here, in particular the flexibility to talk to local governments and to let them have participation in how parks and protected areas in their region can be used and managed by local governments, native bands and people in the region who can now feel some sense of ownership and pride in the areas that are created for their use.

J. Wilson: I'd like to say a few words in support of this bill. The process that the people went through in this province to arrive at creating these protected areas has been going on for a number of years. In another life, starting in '92 and going on to '94, I worked as one of the people in the Cariboo-Chilcotin land use planning process. We came up with what we think was probably one of the best land use plans in the province. We worked long and hard, and we set out protected areas. Some of these were turned into parks relatively quickly, but not very many.

[1030]

By setting out protected areas, there were some concerns that people had with competing interests out there on the land base. Some of these areas had mining claims on them; some had grazing rights on them. There were a number of other tenure holders out there. We recognized this as we went through the land use planning. But a lot of these areas had, really, no other competing interests on them, and they were set aside as protected areas.

As a province, our park system is one of our important assets here. It is a really important asset. We have some of the best parks in the world. To build on that, in my opinion, is a good thing.

When I first looked at this bill, I thought: is this going to be a blanket conversion of protected areas into parks? That was my first reaction. Having gone through the land use planning and knowing all of the issues around protected areas, I had a little concern. To my satisfaction, the minister has said: "We have looked at these things, and the protected areas that we are bringing forward to put into parks will not be causing a problem for any group out there, any industry or tenure holders in that area, because we recognize they have rights. They need to be there, they need to operate, and they need to continue to make a living."

The minister has taken the ones that have got other interests on them and left them as protected areas. As protected areas, it's pretty well a park status — not quite, but it still has the status that prevents certain resource activities and allows others. Going through the land use planning, it was felt that some of these areas needed to stay as protected areas in order to protect the tenures that were in there at the time.

That aside, the areas that we are putting in.... As I look through the book, there are quite a few here. A lot

of them are small areas. They are areas that receive what I would call intensive use, high use. The public goes out there, they can access them, and they do use these areas. To create these parks in these areas, to me, is a good thing. It's something that the people in this province who go out and enjoy the outdoors are going to be really happy with.

I'm happy to have been able to be part of the land use planning process, to know where these things have gone, to see that as government we have taken them one step further and that we're doing something that is going to be good for the province in the future. I would like to offer my support for this bill. Thank you for this opportunity to speak on it.

V. Roddick: I rise today in support of this bill.

I would like to make mention that the member opposite is excellent at ranting and railing, but despite Oscar-winning performances, the whole point is that she was too late — period — to debate Bill 51.

[1035]

We have worked long and hard on Bills 51 and 50. We approved of it; we organized it. We as government do not need to debate this bill in its entirety. It is the members opposite. It is their duty to question the act if they have any questions. The very fact that they weren't here probably means they approve of it.

Deputy Speaker: Hon. members, it is not appropriate to comment on the absence of a member in the House.

V. Roddick: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for bringing that to my attention.

Parks and protected areas. The parks are now up to the 12.5 percent that was....

Interjection.

Deputy Speaker: Member, member.

V. Roddick: Our 12.5 percent is now a reality. That provides certainty and sustainability.

Interjection.

Deputy Speaker: Leader of the Opposition, would you please come to order.

V. Roddick: There is certainty in the fact that we now have investment in this province that can help pay for the sustainability of our wonderful park system. We also have sustainability from the environment point of view because there is now absolutely certified 12.5 percent of our land mass. That is absolutely superb when we have a continent of Europe that wants to make this entire province a park. Now we have certainty — certainty for the animals, for habitat and for us as people that live in this province — and can develop tourism and use our parks to the absolute penultimate of what they were designed for.

The previous minister was queried by the member opposite. I would like to state as a fact that the previous minister is probably one of the only people — certainly one of the very few people — in this entire country that knows anything at all about the Kyoto accord, so I just want that on record.

The previous government madly ran around this province designating this park and that park, but they never provided any management. In fact, they yanked back the management and the ability to look after these parks. They put investment on hold, so there was even less money to look after and manage the animals and the people in the park.

With this bill, we are attempting to organize the 12.5 percent. It's solid and dependable. We will deliver on how we manage and look after these parks. Bills 50 and 51 are inexorably linked — animals and habitat. We in this world of an expounding population have....

Interjection.

Deputy Speaker: Member, take your seat for a second, please.

Leader of the Opposition, please give the member the courtesy of at least keeping your tone down to a dull roar.

V. Roddick: We in this world of burgeoning population — not just in British Columbia, not just in Canada or North America but worldwide — have to bring in a management plan of how we deal with the human being, the environment and the species at risk. It is absolutely imperative; otherwise, we will have an environmental disaster.

[1040]

This government has put its money where its mouth is. It has delivered the 12.5 percent of parkland, and it is going to deliver the ability to sustainably manage this land. It's also going to give comfort to investors that are going to look at this province and say: "Okay, we can come in here. We can invest." Three guesses what happens. Money. Profit. I know that profit is not a word that's in your vocabulary, but profit pays for things. It pays for the services we need. Parks need money to run. Animals in our environment worldwide are in crisis. They need proper management. To be able to do that, we have to generate funds.

J. MacPhail: The member is speaking to Bill 51, the species at risk. Bill 51 was rammed through. We've already debated that, and the member chose not to participate in that debate. Could she keep her comments to the bill we're debating now, please.

V. Roddick: I said, without a doubt, that 50 and 51 are inexorably linked. I am speaking to 50. Parks are what I was talking about. I don't need to clarify that with you. Read *Hansard*. See how many times I mention parks. They're very important. I think that when we get to the management of parks, it's not just in this province. It's around the world that this needs doing,

and we're leading in this ability of managing the human element, the species at risk element and the environmental sustainability.

It has given me great pleasure to get up here and speak to this bill, and I applaud the minister and our government for carrying this forward.

R. Sultan: This bill, as has already been pointed out, permanently protects more than 150,000 hectares of new parks and ecological reserves for British Columbia by establishing 28 new class A parks...

J. MacPhail: Where? Where are they?

R. Sultan: I'll get to it in a moment.

...and one new ecological reserve and adding land to 31 existing class A parks and four ecological reserves.

J. MacPhail: Where? Where's that?

R. Sultan: The Leader of the Opposition asks where....

Deputy Speaker: Member, will you take your seat for a second, please.

Leader of the Opposition, please give the member the courtesy of listening to what he has to say rather than interrupting him.

R. Sultan: Those are very good questions. Where are these? I would be glad to respond.

First of all, this bill and the rather voluminous attachment to it describe two parks that are having their areas more clearly defined: Porteau Cove Park, a very popular roadside park and diving area on Howe Sound, not too far from where I happen to live; Maquinna Marine Park, which will be of great interest to people who enjoy the marine resources of....

J. MacPhail: But where is the park? Where is that?

R. Sultan: Well, I'm sure there's probably a GPS reading here somewhere. It's lot A, district lot 1372, plan 10197, except part in plan 51118. Do you wish me to continue?

J. MacPhail: How embarrassing.

R. Sultan: I don't think it's embarrassing at all to read this long list of parks that are being created. A huge number of new class A parks — who could really object to this?

J. MacPhail: We don't even know where they are.

R. Sultan: Well, I think they're described rather well here — under Schedule A, for example. Let me just give you a list of what we're talking about. The Aleza Lake ecological reserve.

J. MacPhail: Yeah, where's that?

R. Sultan: Well, it's in Cariboo district, and it's described in the official plan deposited in the Crown land registry as plan 3, tube 1902. It contains approximately 269 hectares in the Cariboo.

J. MacPhail: Is it bigger or smaller than was planned?

R. Sultan: I don't have that information, but I suspect the protected area is being converted into a park. I don't really see anything terribly sinful in that.

We go on to the Anne Vallee (Triangle Island) ecological reserve in the Rupert district, the Baeria Rocks ecological reserve in the Barclay district....

Deputy Speaker: Hon. member, take your seat for a second, please. I just want to remind people that this is second reading. To the Leader of the Opposition: second reading generally defines the sort of general feelings of the bill. You'll have full opportunity to speak to this bill in committee stage and ask those very questions. These are general comments that are spoken to in second reading.

[1045]

R. Sultan: In the spirit of just describing the general thrust of this bill, which is a rather long bill if one looks at what it encompasses.... We go on to the Ballingall Islets ecological reserve in the Cowichan district; the Bednesti Lake ecological reserve in the Cariboo; the Beresford Island ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Big Creek ecological reserve in the Lillooet district; the Blackwater Creek ecological reserve in the Cariboo; the Blue/Dease Rivers ecological reserve in the Cassiar district; the Bowen Island ecological reserve — I look out my kitchen window at Bowen Island whenever I'm at home; the Bowser ecological reserve in the Newcastle district; the Browne Lake ecological reserve in Osoyoos; the Buck Hills Road ecological reserve in Yale district; the Burnt Cabin Bog ecological reserve.

My goodness, the list seems to go on and on about all these new parks that are being created: the Byers/Conroy/Harvey/Sinnett Islands ecological reserve; the Campbell Brown (Kalamalka Lake) ecological reserve; the Canoe Islets ecological reserve; the Cardiff Mountain ecological reserve; the Catherine Creek ecological reserve; the Cecil Lake ecological reserve; the Charlie Cole Creek ecological reserve; the Chasm ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Checlet Bay ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Chilako River ecological reserve in the Cariboo; the Chunamon Creek ecological reserve in the Cassiar district; the Cinema Bog ecological reserve in the Cariboo district; Clanninick Creek ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Claud Elliott Creek ecological reserve in the Rupert district. We're not even through the c's yet.

The Clayhurst ecological reserve in the Peace River; the Cleland Island ecological reserve in the Clayoquot district; the Cougar Canyon ecological reserve in the Osoyoos division; the Dewdney and Glide Islands ecological reserve in the Coast district; the Drywilliam Lake ecological reserve; the East Redonda Island ecological reserve; the Ellis Island ecological reserve; the Evans Lake ecological reserve in the Kootenays; Field's Lease ecological reserve in the Similkameen; Fort Nelson River ecological reserve in the Peace; Francis Point ecological reserve in New Westminster district; the Galiano Island ecological reserve; the Gamble Creek ecological reserve....

J. MacPhail: Yeah, where is Gamble Creek?

R. Sultan: Well, Gamble Creek is in the range 5 Coast district — official plan deposited in the Crown land registry as plan 15 tube 1916. It's 969 acres; it's rather large.

The Gingietl Creek ecological reserve in the Cassiar; the Gladys Lake ecological reserve in the Cassiar; the Goosegrass Creek ecological reserve in the Kootenays; the Grayling River Hot Springs ecological reserve in the Peace; the Haley Lake ecological reserve in the Dunsmuir district, Cowichan; the Heather Lake ecological reserve in the Cariboo; the Hudson Rocks ecological reserve in the Nanaimo district; the Ilgachuz Range ecological reserve in the Coast district; the Kingfisher Creek ecological reserve in the Kamloops division, Yale district; Kotcho Lake ecological reserve in the Peace; Lew Creek ecological reserve in the Kootenay district; Lily Pad Lake ecological reserve in Osoyoos; Liumchen ecological reserve in the New Westminster district. I'm only up to page 12 of a 270-page document.

[1050]

The Mackinnon Esker ecological reserve in the Cariboo; the Mahoney Lake ecological reserve in the Similkameen; the Mara Meadows ecological reserve in Kamloops division; McQueen Creek ecological reserve in the Kamloops division; the Misty Lake ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Moore/McKenny/Whitmore Islands ecological reserve in range 3, Coast district; Morice River ecological reserve in range 5, Coast district; the Mount Derby ecological reserve in Rupert district; the Mount Griffin ecological reserve in Kamloops division; the Mount Maxwell ecological reserve in south Saltspring Island — a wonderful part of the world; the Mount Tuam ecological reserve in south Saltspring. It's particularly significant to protect these areas on our very precious Gulf Islands.

The Mount Tzuhalem ecological reserve in the Cowichan district; the Nimpkish River ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Ningunsaw River ecological reserve in the Cassiar district; the Nitinat Lake ecological reserve in the Renfrew district; the Oak Bay Islands ecological reserve in the Victoria district; the Ospika Cones ecological reserve in Cassiar; the Patsuk Creek ecological reserve in the Cariboo; the Portage Brule Rapids ecological reserve in the Cassiar district;

the Robson Bight (Michael Bigg) ecological reserve — I believe that's where people go whale-watching; the Rolla Canyon ecological reserve in the Peace; the Rose Islets ecological reserve in the Cowichan district; the Rose Spit ecological reserve off the Queen Charlottes — one of the windiest spots on earth, I'm told; the Ross Lake ecological reserve in the Yale division; the San Juan Ridge ecological reserve in the Renfrew district; the Sartine Island ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Satellite Channel ecological reserve in the Cowichan district.

Many of these names bring to mind my boating experiences, and it always is a challenge to remember what channel one is in. Now we know that they are in an ecological reserve with enhanced protection.

The Sikanni Chief River ecological reserve in the Peace; the Skeena River ecological reserve in the Coast district; the Skihist ecological reserve in the Kamloops division, Yale district; the Skwaha Lake ecological reserve in Kamloops division, Yale district; Smith River ecological reserve in the Cassiar district; the Soap Lake ecological reserve in the Kamloops division; the Solander Island ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Sutton Pass ecological reserve; the Tahsish River ecological reserve in Rupert district; the Takla Lake ecological reserve in Cassiar; the Ten Mile Point ecological reserve in the Victoria district; the Tow Hill ecological reserve in the Queen Charlotte district; the Trial Islands ecological reserve, a well-known landmark to boaters; the Tsitika Mountain ecological reserve in the Rupert district; the Upper Shuswap River ecological reserve; the Westwick Lakes ecological reserve in Lillooet; the Whipsaw Creek ecological reserve; the Williams Creek ecological reserve; the Yale Garry Oak ecological reserve in the Yale district. Of course, many of us know about the very special Garry oaks, which are in many ways unique to this part of the world and are receiving special protection. Finally, in this particular schedule, we end up with the Yellow Point Bog ecological reserve in Oyster district — 137 hectares, Crown land registry as plan 2 tube 1910, which is, of course, of great significance to the surveyor looking for that particular location.

Mr. Speaker, that is the gist of this particular schedule A, and we're only up to page 20 of a 224-page document. Extrapolating, the entire reading to this House, I suppose, would take us well into the afternoon. But I cannot resist just giving a sampling, at least, of what some of the other named areas are in this remarkable piece of legislation. So let me continue.

[1055]

Schedule B lists such very special parts as the Ambrose Lake ecological reserve, established by order-in-council 2817 in 1971, I believe the code suggests; the Baynes Island ecological reserve; the Big White Mountain ecological reserve; the Chickens Neck Mountain ecological reserve; the Chilliwack River ecological reserve; the Columbia Lake ecological reserve; the Comox Lake Bluffs ecological reserve; the Doc English Bluff ecological reserve; the Drizzle Lake ecological reserve; the Duke of Edinburgh (Pine/Storm/Tree Is-

lands) ecological reserve; the Fraser River ecological reserve; the Gilnockie Creek ecological reserve; the Haynes' Lease ecological reserve; the Honeymoon Bay ecological reserve; the Katherine Tye (Vedder Crossing) ecological reserve; the Kingcome Inlet/Atlatzi River ecological reserve; the Klanawa River ecological reserve; the Klaskish River ecological reserve; the Lasqueti Island ecological reserve; the Lepas Bay ecological reserve; the Megin River ecological reserve; the Meridian Road (Vanderhoof) ecological reserve; the Mount Elliott ecological reserve; the Mount Tinsdale ecological reserve; the Narcosli Lake ecological reserve; the Nechako River ecological reserve; the Parker Lake ecological reserve; the Pitt Polder ecological reserve; the Race Rocks ecological reserve; the Ram Creek ecological reserve; the Raspberry Harbour ecological reserve; the San Juan River Estuary ecological reserve; the Skagit River Cottonwoods ecological reserve; the Skagit River Forest ecological reserve; the Skagit River Rhododendrons ecological reserve; the Stoyoma Creek ecological reserve; the Sunbeam Creek ecological reserve; the Tacheeda Lakes ecological reserve; the Torkelsen Lake ecological reserve; the Tranquille ecological reserve; the Trout Creek ecological reserve; Tsikita River ecological reserve; the Vance Creek ecological reserve; the Vladimir J. Krajina (Port Chanal) ecological reserve; and the Woodley Range ecological reserve.

The list I have just read into the record represents schedule B in this rather voluminous document, and I'm up to page 20 of a 223-page document. It's fascinating reading; it's a geography lesson on our province. I think all of us must feel in our hearts a great debt of gratitude to governments current and past of all political persuasions who have worked so hard and with such great foresight to protect what is probably, I would argue, the most precious part of the world.

[H. Long in the chair.]

We have set aside these areas for future generations. We thank our predecessor government, and we thank the governments since the founding of this province for having carefully set aside these areas as reserves and protected areas as well as class A parks, of course.

Moving on to schedule C. We eventually, I believe, get to a schedule D as well. I don't know if my vocal chords can really carry on. Let me give you a sampling of schedule C, because again, it brings to my mind such wonderful areas of the province that I've either travelled through camping with my wife, worked in as a student and as a surveyor's helper or a construction person of one variety or another, or have visited in more recent years as an MLA or on the mining task force. These names bring to my mind such great memories of not only the magnificent geography of this province but the splendid people one meets when visiting these various areas.

Under schedule C, we see the Adams Lake Marine Park, the Adams Lake Park-Bush Creek site, the Akamina-Kishinena Park, the Alexandra Bridge Park.

Who remembers the Alexandra Bridge? This is one of the historic bridges on the old Cariboo Trail, as I recall. For many years when I was growing up, I think the original bridge still stood there. I think it was originally built for wagons. In the fifties — in a burst of enthusiasm under our famous Highways minister of the day, Flying Phil — it was finally replaced. But I do remember the original Alexandra Bridge, and I didn't realize there's an Alexandra Bridge Park in the Yale district.

[1100]

Alice Lake Park, Allison Lake Park, Anderson Bay Park, Apodaca Park, Arbutus Grove Park, Arctic Pacific Lakes Park — this is in the Peace River — Atlin Park. My goodness, we even have a park in Atlin. I would view the Atlin area as being almost one great big park; it is such a beautiful part of the world.

The Babine Lake Marine Park. As a boater I really do appreciate these marine parks. The Babine Mountains Park, the Babine River Corridor Park and the Bamberton Park. This is in the Malahat and well known to citizens of this part of the world. Banana Island Park. I have never heard of Banana Island, and I wish the Leader of the Opposition were here to ask me where that is, because I would say it is in the Kamloops division, Yale district.

Barkerville Park. We visited Barkerville with the mining task force. The Bear Creek Park, the Bear Glacier Park, the Bearhole Lake Park, the Beaton Park, the Beaton River Park, the Beaumont Park, the Bellhouse Park, the Big Bar Lake Park, the Big Bunsby Marine Park in the Rupert district, the Bijoux Falls Park, the Birkenhead Lake Park in Lillooet, the Bishop River Park, the Blanket Creek Park, the Blue River Black Spruce Park, the Blue River Pine Park, the Bobtail Mountain Park, the Bocoock Peak Park, the Bodega Ridge Park, the Border Lake Park, the Boulder Creek Park, the Boundary Creek Park, the Boya Lake Park, the Boyle Point Park, the Brackendale Eagles Park. If you have never gone up to Brackendale, which is not too far from where I live, to see the congregation of eagles every January, you have missed one of the spectacular nature experiences. I commend it to you highly, and it is a park.

Brandywine Falls Park — again, not too far from where I live; the Bridal Veil Falls Park, which I'm sure many of you recall seeing out of the right-hand side of your car as you drive between Chilliwack and Hope.

Bridge Lake Park, Bromley Rock Park, Brooks Peninsula Park, Broughton Archipelago Park. The Broughton Archipelago is, again, well known to the boating community.

Buccaneer Bay Park, Bucking Horse River Wayside Park, Bugaboo Park in the Kootenays, Bulkley Junction Park, Bull Canyon Park, Burges and James Gadsden Park, Burns Lake Park, Butler Ridge Park, Caligata Lake Park, Call Lake Park, Callaghan Lake Park, Canal Flats Park, Canim Beach Park, Cape Scott Park, Cariboo Nature Park, Carmanah Walbran Park, Carp Lake Park, Catala Island Marine Park, Cathedral Park, Champion Lakes Park, Charlie Lake Park, Chase Park,

Chemainus River Park, Chilliwack Lake Park, Chilliwack River Park, Choquette Hot Springs Park, Christie Memorial Park, Christina Lake Park, Chu Chua Cottonwood Park in Kamloops.

The Cinnemousun Narrows Park, Clayoquot Arm Park, Clayoquot Plateau Park, Clendinning Park, Close-to-the-Edge Park — that's a fascinating name. I have never heard it before — Close-to-the-Edge.

The Codville Lagoon Marine Park, Cody Caves Park, Coldwater River Park, Collinson Point Park, Columbia Lake Park, Conkle Lake Park, Copeland Islands Marine Park, Coquihalla Canyon Park. As a young lad, I remember going to visit the Coquihalla Canyon with my uncle, who was a section man on the Kettle Valley Railway. He would regale me with stories of how he met an oncoming steam locomotive as he pedalled his handcar into one end of the tunnel, and the locomotive came in the other end at what I guess are now called the Quintet Tunnels. In those days it was just the Coquihalla Canyon and to me, as a young lad, a frightening place. Walking out on those railroad bridges without any railings and expecting a locomotive to come around the corner always frightened me.

[1105]

A magnificent natural heritage and great steelhead territory. The steelhead are challenged, and we had a meeting in my riding office last week of local citizens on the North Shore concerned about the steelhead. This is a very unique species, a salmonid but one which can become habituated and actually refuse to go to sea. I guess they like living within the terrain of British Columbia. They decide to stay here and not go down to the ocean, sometimes. They deserve all the protection we can get, and of course, we have the Coquihalla Canyon Park to help.

Cormorant Channel Marine Park, Coste Rocks Park, Cottonwood River Park, Crooked River Park, Crownsnest Park in the Kootenays, Cultus Lake Park — a very popular place — Cummins Lakes Park, Dala-Kildala Rivers Estuaries Park, Darke Lake Park, Davis Lake Park, Dawley Passage Park, Desolation Sound Marine Park. I hope to be heading up to Desolation Sound on my boat in August. We'll see if I get there, if we can just get through this heavy legislative schedule.

The Diana Lake Park, Dionisio Point Park, Discovery Island Marine Park. Again, I passed the Discovery Islands coming over here on my boat on the weekend. It's bit tricky navigating, but these new GPS toys on the boat simplify life enormously.

Dixie Cove Marine Park, Downing Park, Drewry Point Park, Driftwood Canyon Park, Drumbeg Park, Dry Gulch Park. That sounds like something out of a Hollywood movie. It's in the Kootenays, however.

Duffey Lake Park. Now, there is a famous name. Dune Za Keyih Park, a.k.a. Frog-Gataga. Eagle Bay Park, Eakin River Canyon Park, Eakin Creek Floodplain Park, East Pine Park, E.C. Manning Park — a wonderful park on what we used to call the Hope-Princeton Highway, and a great place.

Echo Bay Marine Park — I've been there. Echo Lake Marine Park, Ed Bird-Estella Lakes Park, Elk Falls Park

in the Sayward district, Elk Lakes Park, Elk Valley Park. We seem to have an awful lot of elks in these park names. Ellison Park, Emar Lakes Park, Emory Creek Park. I know Emory Creek; we used to pass by it on the way to Hope, where I spent my summers as a lad.

Eneas Lakes Park, English Lake Park, Englishman River Falls Park, Entiako Park, Epsom Park, Erg Mountain Park, Erie Creek Park, Eskers Park, Ethel F. Wilson Memorial Park. I'm sure there's a story about Ethel F. Wilson, and our member for Cariboo North could perhaps enlighten us on who Ethel F. Wilson might be. I'm afraid I have no further information.

Evanoff Park, Exchamsiks River Park, F.H. Barber Park, Fillongley Park, Finlay-Russel Park, Finn Creek Park, Fintry Park, Flores Island Park, Foch-Gilttoyes Park. Where do some of these names come from? Fort George Canyon Park, Fossli Park, French Beach Park, Gabriola Sands Park, Garden Bay Marine Park, Garibaldi Park — that has to be one of the most magnificent pieces of real estate on the entire globe, and of course, we pass it by as we head on up to skiing.

Gibson Marine Park, Gilnockie Park, Gitnadoiks River Park, Goat Range Park, Golden Ears Park. Golden Ears — what connotations of hiking and splendour in the coast range.

Goldpan Park, Goldstream Park, Gordon Bay Park, Great Glacier Park, Green Inlet Marine Park, Green Lake Park, Grohman Narrows Park, Gwillim Lake Park, Hai Lake-Mount Herman Park, Halkett Bay Park, Hamber Park, Harmony Islands Marine Park, Háthayim Marine Park, a.k.a. Von Donop Marine Park. Haynes Point Park, Heather-Dina Lakes Park, Helliwell Park — a famous name, a distinguished academic.

Hemer Park, Herald Park, Hesquiat Lake Park, Hesquiat Peninsula Park, High Lakes Basin Park, Homathko Estuary Park, Horsefly Lake Park. I often wondered what it would be like to set up a tourist camp on Horsefly Lake. It struck me the name might repel some of the people considering whether to spend the summers there.

[1110]

Hyland River Park, Inkaneep Park, Inland Lake Park, Iskut River Hot Springs Park. The Iskut — very much in the courts these days.

Jackman Flats Park, Jackson Narrows Marine Park, James Chabot Park, Jediah Island Marine Park. Jediah Island has a story. This was the son of a well-known chartered accountant who was killed attempting an ascent of Mount Everest, or maybe it was K2. In any event, he directed that his life insurance proceeds be devoted to the acquisition of some endangered parkland on the coast. Between his estate and the efforts of the provincial government of the day — and I guess perhaps we should give credit to our predecessor government — this wonderful, wonderful island has been set aside. It is now a favourite destination of boaters who go there. They used to see a horse that was left behind when the inhabitants of the island finally grew too old to maintain it and sold it. The couple — who were florists, originally from Seattle — sold it for about

20 percent of the market value, because they wanted it preserved as a park. They left their horse behind. You could go over to Jedediah Island, and the horse, even though it was growing blind, would find you. You would pick apples off the tree and feed the horse.

Jewel Lake Park, Jimsmith Lake Park, Joffre Lakes Park, John Dean Park, Johnstone Creek Park and Juan de Fuca Park. I would tell the House that we are now up to page 74 of a 224-page document. In other words, we are not quite one-third of the way through the list.

What's the point of me standing up here for half an hour and going on and on and on about the place-names of British Columbia? The point of it is that this bill — to repeat — permanently protects more than 150,000 hectares of new parks and ecological reserves for British Columbia by establishing 28 new class A parks and one new ecological reserve. Let me repeat that. We are establishing, with this bill, 28 new class A parks for the benefit of all British Columbians and one new ecological reserve, and adding land to 31 existing class A parks and four ecological reserves.

Perhaps some missed the point made earlier in this debate that 13 percent of the land base that was suggested is now protected by parks, and it may well be that we have a higher number than that. I would say, in conclusion, that this is far in excess of the original 12 percent target set by the Premier of a former government.

K. Krueger: Mr. Speaker, if you will indulge it, the Leader of the Opposition said a number of startling things when she made her remarks earlier, and I would just like to respond to some of those before I specifically address Bill 50. I want to make it clear, right off the bat, that I certainly support Bill 50. I'm proud of this government and the efficient way that it gets things done. I'm proud of the system the Premier set up by which legislation makes its laborious way to this House.

We have private members in this government — more private members than any government in British Columbia's history before us. Every one of them is empowered to an extent, I am told by former MLAs who served in this House, that no previous private member ever was empowered. The Premier set up this system out of respect for the people of British Columbia and the representatives they elect to represent them in this place. He had told every one of us before we were ever elected — even before we were elected to opposition — that in this House we would always have a free vote at the end of the day on matters other than the confidence bills, which are the throne speech and budget.

Every cabinet minister knows that every private member in this place....

Deputy Speaker: Member, I would like to bring you back to Bill 50. We're debating Bill 50.

[1115]

K. Krueger: Every private member knows that when their constituents come to them and express concern about a particular park, a particular protected area

— a particular business enterprise they would like to develop which perhaps is in an area they know other people want designated as a protected area.... When a constituent comes to one of us — a member of this B.C. Liberal government — and expresses those sorts of concerns, gives us that sort of input, we check it out. We talk to the interested parties that we know about. We know that in this system, the Premier devised that we can go to a government caucus committee, because every one of us is a member of a committee. We are invited to all of the meetings of all the other government caucus committees, so we can always attend the relevant government caucus committee meetings, and we can raise the issues that are important to our constituents about whatever aspect of their lives the provincial government touches on, which of course means pretty much every aspect of their lives.

We can go to the government caucus committees. The government caucus committees have to approve of a minister's actions before a minister tables legislation in this House and moves forward on major policy fronts — or what might even seem to be minor policy fronts if they directly affect our constituents. In this way, we have power that private members in this place never had in the past.

By the time legislation makes its way to the floor of this chamber with this government, a minister probably feels pretty certain he or she is going to receive the support of the majority of the members of the government caucus. If the minister didn't have that support, the legislation could well be defeated on the floor of this House.

I know that's not something the NDP can really grasp. It is not really within the realm of their understanding, because things weren't that way with them. I recall their private members joking about how they played poker in the back rooms of these awesome buildings while they waited for the votes because they were simply expected to vote with the government, no matter what the government did. It isn't that way....

Deputy Speaker: I would like to remind the member that it is second reading of Bill 50, and we would like to stay on second reading, please.

K. Krueger: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't dispute your rulings at all, but the Leader of the Opposition was allowed considerable latitude. She spoke very little about this bill and instead wanted an explanation of why she didn't see more members standing up to debate this bill and the one before it. So forgive me if I spend a little too much time on that to suit you.

We do bend over backwards to accommodate that opposition. We didn't know she wanted to speak. She got up on the wrong side of bed this morning — and a little late to boot — so she was angry. She made some points. I wanted to make sure we had a chance to explain to her that the members of this government are very well versed on legislation, or at least on the government's intentions, long before a bill like this hits the floor of the House.

As the member for Nelson-Creston said, it isn't as if the legislation is tremendously complex. Now, the legal descriptions are. That's another matter. The Leader of the Opposition suggested it was somehow negligent if we didn't debate the legal descriptions of the protected areas and parks that this weighty bill refers to. It looks weighty. But as you know, it is really only the first couple of pages that are the legislation. The rest is the schedules, largely legal descriptions. They're very complex. Well-qualified, trusted civil servants put a whole lot of time into drafting these particulars to make sure they're letter-perfect.

I'm sure the public doesn't want us to spend time in this wonderful place — valuable debating time, expensive time.... It costs a lot of money to run this Legislature and employ the staff. We're not going to be debating, as she suggested, the size of each of these parks and protected areas, the number of hectares, where the legal documents are to be found. We're not going to go into that kind of detail.

I was listening to the member from West Vancouver talking about the many places he has been in his long and distinguished life in British Columbia. He is an active boatman, as we all know. I have been to many of these places too. As the Leader of the Opposition was making her points, I was flipping through the schedules and thinking about a place like Maquinna Marine Park. If she hasn't been there, I hope she gets there sometime because Nootka Sound is a wonderful place to visit and a great place to fish.

We know she is looking forward to her honeymoon, and we're looking forward to that too. When she finds time for that honeymoon, I hope she gets out and around British Columbia because what the member doesn't grasp is that we actually live in these places. We have the privilege in our caucus of representing everywhere in British Columbia. The only constituencies that aren't held by one of us.... Well, there are three independents and the two NDP ridings in Vancouver, but other than that, the only constituencies we don't hold are those five. So we have been to all these places. We represent the people who live near these protected areas and parks, and we hear from them.

[1120]

I've got, for example, a tremendously interested group of people who call themselves the Friends of Wells Gray Park. They're really good people and really dedicated to that place. Recently the regional district director for that area of the North Thompson had suggested that there ought to be a connector road through Wells Gray Park over to the Cariboo. There has been a storm of protest from people, because my constituents have a tremendous love for that park. They're very, very resistant to any sort of major change of that nature, and they want to have a say. They want to express their opinion. They want to stand up and be counted. They expect me to listen, and I do. If changes like that were being proposed by this government, I would have a chance to deal with them in government caucus committee. If I wasn't hearing what my constituents

wanted me to hear, you bet I would stand up in this place and debate changes like that.

But when it comes to this sort of schedule, this is good news, and the member knows that. We are adding thousands and thousands — 150,000 — of hectares, an area 13 times the size of the city of Vancouver, to the protected areas of British Columbia. We're up to 12½ percent of the land mass of this province — approximately 11.86 million hectares with protected-area status. That is something to celebrate.

That's something I would have expected the NDP to celebrate, and I think the reason it wasn't being celebrated this morning when the leader spoke was that she had got out of the wrong side of bed and, as she said, had only had a cursory look at this legislation. She may have thought: "Wow, the thing is an inch thick, and I haven't had a chance to read it." If she had the time to really even do that cursory look, she would have realized that she only needed to read the first couple of pages. The rest is largely legalese, except that, as the member from West Vancouver pointed out, it's a wonderful list of beautiful places all around British Columbia. If she had been there, she couldn't help but love them, and I hope she gets a chance to be there.

McQueen Lake ecological reserve. McQueen Lake is in the constituency next to mine, and there is a great site where children, school children, are taken to learn about nature. It's something that a lot of people have collaborated on over the years, and it's a marvellous protected area. Beaton River Park. I remember going to the Beaton River when I was a little kid growing up in Fort St. John.

Like the member from West Vancouver, I have just a tremendous love of a lot of these places that I've been to. Blue River Black Spruce Park and Blue River Pine Park. Blue River is in my constituency. I'm up there all the time. There's a wonderful development, Mike Wiegele heliskiing, employing hundreds of people where it was just a tiny town in disarray because of the end of a number of railway jobs there. People who live in Blue River prize these parks, and you bet we care about them. I see Burns Lake Park. I used to fish at Tchesinkut Lake and Takysie Lake.

Deputy Speaker: Member, I hate to interrupt you at this time, but I think the Minister of Human Resources would like to seek the floor for a moment.

Hon. S. Hagen: I seek leave to make an introduction.

Leave granted.

Introductions by Members

Hon. S. Hagen: It's always a pleasure to introduce guests from my constituency of Comox Valley. This morning I'm pleased to introduce to the House 27 grades 5 and 6 students from Royston Elementary School with their teacher, Ms. Pam Twin, and five

adults accompanying them. Will the House please join me in making them welcome.

Debate Continued

K. Krueger: I won't continue very long here, but when you look at this schedule, it's poetry, actually, if you know these places and you think about them and the things that you've done there. Herald Park, which is in the member for Shuswap's constituency but right next to mine, is another wonderful provincial park. Hesquiat Lake Park and Hesquiat Peninsula Park. There is a book published called *Cougar Annie's Garden* about a pioneer woman who lived in that area, and they called her Cougar Annie because she protected the goats that she raised by being a sharpshooter. She shot something like 40 cougars in the time that she lived there, and she lived there to a ripe old age in spite of the fact that several of them attacked her.

Anybody who has lived in B.C. and loves the place and has travelled a lot.... Looking through this piece of legislation, it is almost like a book you should keep on the shelf because it can take you back on a lot of sentimental journeys. Kalamalka Lake Park — an exquisitely beautiful lake that comes right down to the city of Vernon.

[1125]

Kiskatinaw Park. You think about these names and where they came from, the long and wonderful heritage we have with first nations people. When I was a kid growing up in Dawson Creek, we got our water supply out of the Kiskatinaw River.

Kitwanga Mountain Park. I used to represent the Insurance Corporation of B.C. and handle native people's claims when they had unfortunate motor vehicle collisions from Kitwanga, Kispiox and all through that part of the world.

I know I have a number of colleagues who would like to speak too, and I don't want to monopolize their share of the speaking time this morning. I hope the Leader of the Opposition takes the time to actually travel this province once she's free of.... She has been a tremendously hard worker in this place. As she said, she's worked hard to do her job, but she is due for a holiday. I recommend that she get a paddle and a canoe. When she has tied the knot and is on her honeymoon, I hope she gets to go to a lot of these places. I would be happy to sit down with her over coffee and make her a list, in order of priority, of where I would go first if I were her.

I thank all of the members for the remarks they're making today. I thank the minister for tabling this legislation. Certainly, I support it.

J. Bray: I stand very proud to be able to support Bill 50. The constituents in my riding have a very strong desire to see parks — class A parks, protected areas — in this province and have spoken to me on a regular basis about those issues. I know that my constituents are going to be very supportive of Bill 50. They are going to be very pleased to see that we are, in fact, ex-

panding the park system. We are providing for greater protection for areas.

One of the things that's fascinating is that the members of the opposition.... I think the member for Kamloops-North Thompson talked about the Leader of the Opposition getting out of bed on the wrong side, and that may well be true. I think there's another reason why the opposition would come in here and complain about a bill that adds more than 150,000 hectares to the park system. I know there are other reasons why going up to 12.5 percent in the park system in B.C. would make the members of the opposition and Carole James unhappy. It's not just Bill 50. It is what Bill 50 represents, which is something that the NDP could never do.

This process didn't come about the way the NDP did the park system. Many of my colleagues from different parts of the province have told me of the frustration that their constituents and their communities felt when the NDP decided they were going to have a park. The analysis went something like this. They put up a map in the cabinet room, and someone went up with a pencil — HB No. 4, I think — drew a circle around an area and said: "That's going to be a park." That was literally what it felt like for many of the communities. There was no consultation with first nations, no consultation with the districts, no consultation with municipalities, no consultation with industry, no consultation with tourism operators, no consultation with guide-trappers outfitters — simply a political decision with no sense of what the ramifications might be.

I think nobody in this chamber argues with the importance of parks and the value of parks, the value of protected areas, the value of protecting species at risk, the value of enhancing our environment for future generations. I don't think anybody in this House would argue that. It is not as simple as the NDP process of drawing circles around maps and saying: "Thou shalt be a park." There are existing uses for those areas. There are existing places that are being used by a multiple of people whose livelihoods and whose family's survival depend on those activities. When there was no consultation, entire towns found themselves left out in the cold. The impact on families was traumatic.

There should be no illusions as to the fact that some of the depopulation of our smaller communities is directly a result of the way the NDP managed the park system. Oh, they expanded it. They set a target. But they did it in a way that provided no certainty for local communities, no certainty for investors, no certainty for the working families in those communities. As a result, you saw declining populations because the investors wouldn't come, because there was no process. There was no thought going into it.

[1130]

Last year the Premier committed to the Union of B.C. Municipalities that before there was any expansion of the park system, before there was any conversion of protected areas to class A parks, there would be meaningful consultations with regional districts and local governments to make sure that the needs of work-

ing families, the needs of communities, were measured into that discussion.

The reason why the Leader of the Opposition is angry is because we've been successful in that. We have worked with local governments who want to preserve their environment but also want to preserve their communities, want the opportunities for working families who make their living on the land base to still be able to do that and protect their environment.

You see, the NDP felt that anybody who lived outside the lower mainland or southern Vancouver Island somehow had no desire to protect their environment. Therefore, government had to do it for them, because you couldn't trust the people. I can tell you, as I've said many times as I've travelled around this province, there are no greater stewards for our environment and there are no greater advocates for our natural heritage than the people who live in our heartlands. The people who make their living on the land base are the strongest advocates.

They want a government that will work with their local communities to ensure the protection and enhancement of environmental standards, the protection and enhancement of our park systems, the protection and enhancement of our species at risk. But they want it done in a way that also recognizes their need and desire and right to live, to work, to play in their communities. They don't need communities that have successfully clearcut their entire areas, cemented their entire areas and drive SUVs, then deciding arbitrarily that they know best how other parts of the province should manage their environment. They want a provincial government that works with them.

Bill 50 is the result of that collaborative process where local communities were part of the decision-making process. We are now expanding the park system to an area where just the expansion is 13 times the size of Vancouver. It is a significant amount of protected area. The difference is that it's going to enhance tourism. The difference is that it's going to enhance stability for local communities. The difference is that it's got the support of the people who live there.

That's why the opposition is so ornery, because we have demonstrated again how different levels of government can work together on behalf of the same constituents and achieve great success. That was something they couldn't do in ten years, and we've been doing it consistently day in and day out for the last three-plus years.

I know my constituents support the expansion of our class A park system. I know my constituents support real legislation to protect species at risk, and I know that my constituents support a government that will work with local communities to take their interests to heart as we reach provincial objectives. Bill 50 is good for working families. Bill 50 is good for our environment. Bill 50 is good for our province. Most importantly, Bill 50 is good for our children and our grandchildren, and I'm proud to support Bill 50.

G. Trumper: I'm pleased to speak to Bill 50. Coming from a part of the province on Vancouver Island which has many parks, it is certainly a backbone of some of our tourist economy. I do want to point out that in previous years, parks were put in with little thought to access for various reasons by previous governments. I look at the Walbran and the Carmanah, which are incredibly difficult places to get to. On Vancouver Island, I'm really pleased to see that although we certainly look to our resources as our main economic driver, parks play an integral part in developing our economy and encouraging tourists to see our magnificent countryside and our marine and provincial parks.

[1135]

I'm really pleased today to be able to say that in my particular area, we have had some additions to parks and ecological reserves, which are primarily because of private land acquisitions. One of them in particular, which I know has been in the headlines quite a lot recently, is MacMillan Provincial Park. We were able to acquire land from Weyerhaeuser, and it will now legally be part of the park. We continue to work with various agencies, because we would like to see that park enlarged.

That park, specifically, is on Highway 4. A huge number of people come through that park as tourists. One of the things I have found out is that tourists from Germany, when they come to Vancouver Island, know about Cathedral Grove and know about Della Falls. I've had German students staying in my house over the summer for many years, and those are the things they know about Vancouver Island.

For those of you who have not been to Cathedral Grove, you need to take the time to go. It is a magnificent stand of trees although unfortunately, because they are old growth, like human beings, they grow old. Some of those trees are not in good shape and are dying, but it is very encouraging to see the work that is happening now. We're upgrading some of the services in that particular park, and hopefully, we will get into a reasonable parking lot so that it is safe for the tourists. We also have Kennedy Lake, Horne Lake Provincial Park, where a lot of people go down into the caves, and Sproat Lake Provincial Park, which we've been able to acquire some land for from private centres.

There's one thing I would like to comment on, because it is very important for this particular group of people. On the west coast of Vancouver Island is the Hesquiat band. They're a small community up near Hot Springs Cove. They have no road access, and the only way to get there is by floatplane or by boat. If you go by boat, you will find it is a very steep access to the village and very difficult for them to do business, to expand their property there.

I am pleased that in this legislation there will be access to a marine park that will enable them, in conjunction with TimberWest, to push a road through, which will give them a better site up one of the other inlets for better access by water and a safer access. They are wanting to build a school there. With the ac-

cess they have now, it is really a very difficult project for them to undertake. By having this access through the park, which they have been asking for, for considerable time, it's going to make a tremendous impact. They have tourism up there. They have a lodge up there. With the new school they're proposing to put in, it's going to be of great benefit to them. I'm very, very pleased to see that this is in the legislation today, as it will make a huge difference to them.

Parks are an important part of our livelihoods in the rural areas of British Columbia. We have so many people coming to see them. We need to have a balance in the province of being able to work with our resources and, at the same time, to enjoy our provincial parks. I am pleased to support this motion. I know it is going to be of great benefit to my particular riding.

W. Cobb: I, like the member for Cariboo North, was involved in the land use planning. These parks and protected areas didn't come easily. I think for anybody that was at the table, particularly in our area, for two and a half years, we take this personally. It's very important that the tables had the opportunity to decide on these protected areas. Most of these protected areas, now to be parks, were in fact decided at those local tables.

I also agree with the member for Delta South that if, as in Bill 51, we are to take care of our endangered species, we have to have these parks and protected areas. As the population grows and our urban areas expand, we have to have areas set aside so that the species will have a place and have habitat to live on.

[1140]

The member also suggested that in the previous bill that was passed, we were not taking care of the grizzly bears. Well, I'd like to say that maybe I could buy a counter for her, and she could go out and count some of those grizzly bears that are chasing campers out of their campsites in the Bella Coola valley. They're actually eating the fish right off the end of the line. That's how aggressive they are. To suggest we're not taking care of the grizzly bears is a little bit of a stretch.

The member of the opposition also suggests we're ramming the legislation. Well, on one day, if there isn't any speaker, she suggests we're ramming. On another day, if we have speakers, she suggests that we're stalling. I feel really, really sorry for her fiancé, because it would appear she can never be satisfied.

She also suggests that we don't know what's in this legislation and whether we're adding or subtracting. Well, I'll just give you a few lists on some of the areas. The new parks and additions established as a result of the Okanagan-Shuswap LRMP. There are 108 hectares added to the Shuswap Lake Marine Park; there are 102 hectares added to the Yard Creek Park.

Another list: 43 hectares added to the total of 233 hectares; 716 hectares, for a total of 22,000 hectares; eight hectares added, for a total of 119 hectares in the Chemainus park; 6.7 hectares; 617 hectares; 156 hectares; 65 hectares added; 98.4 hectares added; 31 hectares; 1.29 hectares added; 165 hectares; 18.5 hectares

added; 123 hectares; 45 hectares; 32; 100; 12.34; 73; eight; 899 hectares; one hectare; 83 hectares.

The list goes on. For her to suggest that we don't know whether we're adding or subtracting is totally out of line. If she had read through like the rest of us did.... I did, in fact, read the legislation which she accused our members of not reading. I did, and there's some very good news here. We are in fact, as the member for Delta South suggested, setting aside these parks and protected areas so the rest of the communities can get on with their life and we can have economic development and carry on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity.

Hon. S. Santori: I want to just spend a couple of moments in support of Bill 50, the Parks and Protected Areas Statutes Amendment Act, 2004.

I am taken aback by some of the comments made earlier by the member opposite. I was born and raised in rural British Columbia. I served as the mayor of a small community in my riding for eight years and as a councillor for five. I can stand up here with a great deal of confidence in saying that I have enough knowledge to understand the challenges we have in rural British Columbia in diversifying our economy. I can also stand up here with great confidence and say that no one respects our parks and our natural beauty that we have in British Columbia more than myself and those who live in rural British Columbia. I can stand up here with great confidence to know how important those parks are to our well-being in this province and to the economic benefits they have in areas such as tourism.

I also understand that as laudable as it may sound to the member opposite that we want this province to be one big, huge national park, the reality is that rural British Columbia and those people and families who live in those communities cannot survive. We also understand and accept the fact that there is such a thing as a balance, where we can experience the adventures our parks provide us and the beauty and nature out there before us that we sometimes take for granted because we are embodied in such a great environment like this. But we recognize that we need to find that balance to sustain our communities in rural British Columbia.

I'm taken aback by the member opposite when we talk about initiatives that this government has taken in order to restore the sustainability and viability of communities throughout this province, throughout rural British Columbia.

[1145]

Early in our mandate we took aggressive steps to ensure that we could bring forestry back to British Columbia to sustain these communities — and to be better for children and families in those communities. There was not one bill she supported that enhanced and improved the forest industry in British Columbia. We did it. We came forth with initiatives to deal with the mining industry in the province, once again, to ensure the future sustainability and viability of rural British Co-

lumbia. Not one initiative did those members opposite support.

We talked about oil and gas and other ways of sustaining and ensuring the viability of these communities. Once again, they were not supportive of those initiatives. The member opposite made reference earlier to resort development. It sounds to me that she's also opposed to resort development.

I've got to throw the question back. If you don't want us to mine, if you don't want us to log, if you don't want resorts and you don't want oil and gas, tell me what solution that member opposite has for restoring rural communities throughout British Columbia. She may think that we don't need an economy, that all we need to do is have good social programs and higher welfare payments.

You know what? The people in my communities don't want that. They want to work. The work takes place on the land base, whether it be the oil industry, whether it be mining, whether it be forestry, whether it be resort development or whether it be tourism. The land base is there for everyone. As a government we have worked extremely hard to ensure that we do have that balance, that we do not have to make decisions between the environment and the economic well-being of our communities.

I think Bill 50 truly illustrates that we are finding that balance and that we do recognize and are enhancing the park system in the province. I want to conclude and say that this bill does reach that balance. It does send a strong message to British Columbians that we believe in our parks, that they play an integral part for British Columbians. It opens up the world and invites the world to come to British Columbia and enjoy the natural beauty that we have. I conclude with my support of Bill 50.

L. Mayencourt: It's a pleasure to rise in the House today and speak in favour of Bill 50. I want to commend the Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection for his vision in making good on this commitment that we made to British Columbians almost exactly three years ago. Today what we are doing is creating 37 new class A parks and one new ecological reserve, and we are expanding 34 existing parks. That's important. That's a really significant contribution to the future of British Columbia. We know that parks are beautiful. We know that they're nice to look at and nice to go to.

I want to share some personal experience. I grew up in a large family in Surrey. There were eight kids, my mom and my dad, and every once in a while we had someone else staying with us for one reason or another. My dad worked in a job in the public service. He didn't make a whole lot of money. My mom stayed at home raising kids and baking bread and all that sort of stuff.

When summer holidays came around, one of the few things we got to do was go out camping. We got to get in the car, throw a trailer on the back and fill it up with the tent and sleeping bags and borrowed-this and borrowed-that. We went out to a campground some-

where in British Columbia. It meant a lot to us. It gave us something. You know, there were a lot of kids in school who were going to Disneyland or some other places. It gave me and my family something — to come back from summer holidays to school and say that I'd gone and done something. It made me proud that we were able to do that. It was fun. It was a great way to be with the family. It was a great way to meet families like ours. It was really important to me in growing up.

With these amendments, B.C. parks are now going to total 821. It really totals up to 11.8 million hectares. Now, I don't know what a hectare is — I've had a lot of trouble converting to metric from whatever the other one was — but I'll tell you that it's a lot of land. It's a lot of land in British Columbia. It is almost 13 percent of the land in British Columbia. That is a pretty massive piece of real estate, if you will, that's been set aside for future generations, for kids that need a place to go and hike, need a place to go and camp or swim or fish. I think those are really important contributions that we make.

[1150]

The additions that are here today are 13 times the size of Vancouver. Now, I know Vancouver like the back of my hand. I have gone around the borders of it, and I know it's a big city. The 150,000 hectares that we're adding is 13 times the size of Vancouver. It is amazing to me that we are deciding to set that aside for future generations. I think it is really important that we do that.

Mr. Speaker, you're from an area on the Sunshine Coast. One of the campgrounds that I used to go to with my dad and my family was Saltery Bay. My dad died in 1995. He died in the spring. We had a very close relationship; I loved him. His name was Marcel. He was a good, good man. He worked hard all his life, had a great time up to 83, and then it was over. In the midst of my grieving, it came to me what I needed to do. I had to go up to Saltery Bay, pitch a tent and be there with my dad.

The park system is not just land. It is memories. It is value for kids in the future. It was so important to my healing, to recognizing my father for what he was, to go back to that park. I am constantly reminded of that and of my mom, my dad and my siblings jumping into the back of an old Ford Fairlane with a wooden trailer behind us and heading out into the great blue yonder to visit British Columbia. It was worth it.

I am very proud to be part of a government that has set aside this much land for British Columbians in the future. I don't know why the Leader of the Opposition objected to this. I don't know. I heard it, but I don't know what she was objecting to. I know that if I talk to Adriane Carr of the Green Party or if I talk to environmentalists or if I talk to just about anyone in British Columbia today, they tell me that this is a good idea, that this is a valuable contribution to our future and that we should do it.

I support it 100 percent. Despite any words to the contrary from the Leader of the Opposition, this is important. This is leaving a legacy for our kids. It is al-

lowing us to retain special memories in our lives. It is not just land; it's all of those things that bring families together, that bring communities together. I support this bill wholeheartedly.

Deputy Speaker: The Minister of Water, Land and Air Protection closes debate on Bill 50.

Hon. B. Barisoff: I'd like to close with a few comments about this piece of legislation and how our government is committed to enhancing our parks and protected areas for British Columbia.

When the Premier travels overseas, he lets everyone know that British Columbia is the most beautiful, most spectacular place in the world to visit. Our parks and protected areas are key to that statement. Just think for a moment: Wells Gray Park, Strathcona Park, Kokanee Glacier Park, Mount Robson Park and, as the member opposite mentioned, Cathedral Grove park.

These parks are known across British Columbia, across Canada and around the world. I stand with pleasure today to bring forward the legislation that will add another 150,000 hectares to our world-class parks and protected areas. In just a few years from now, people around the world will be talking about names like Lakelse Lake Wetlands Park, Nation Lakes Park and Monashee Park. These are new parks created through this legislation. These are new opportunities we're creating for tourists and residents alike. This is great news for British Columbia.

I want to talk a moment about newly created Myra-Bellevue Provincial Park. The park was previously a protected area. It is home to the Myra Canyon railway trestles, which we unfortunately lost during the horrific fires of last summer. But out of the ashes come hope and opportunity. Hope and opportunity are two foundations that helped build British Columbia. These foundations are hard at work. The Myra Canyon Trestle Society, the city and residents of Kelowna, our government and our partners in Ottawa are all working together to rebuild these trestles. Just think: a hundred years ago the rails that ran across the trestles opened up the Okanagan to the world. The communities in my riding — Penticton, Oliver, Osoyoos — all developed, at least in part, because of the railway that came across those trestles.

[1155]

The trestles will be rebuilt. The trestles are a tourism draw from the central Okanagan, and now, with the creation of Myra-Bellevue provincial park, they will become an even greater draw for tourists from around the world.

In six years from now we'll welcome the world for the 2010 Olympic Games. Our government is taking steps now in order to open up British Columbia. This piece of legislation creates 28 new parks, adding to 34 others — just one step in opening up British Columbia to the world. The expanded Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre, the development of new back-country recreation opportunities, the new golf and destination resorts — all are opening up to welcome the world to British Columbia.

As I said at the beginning of my comments, the Premier tells people from around the world about the spectacular beauty of British Columbia. I can tell you without hesitation that he is 100 percent correct. British Columbia is the most beautiful province in the most beautiful country in the world. Bill 50 will only enhance its reputation.

I move second reading.

Motion approved.

Hon. B. Barisoff: I move that the bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole House to be considered at the next sitting of the House after today.

Bill 50, Parks and Protected Areas Statutes Amendment Act, 2004, read a second time and referred to a Committee of the Whole House for consideration at the next sitting of the House after today.

Hon. S. Santori moved adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

Deputy Speaker: The House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. today.

The House adjourned at 11:57 a.m.