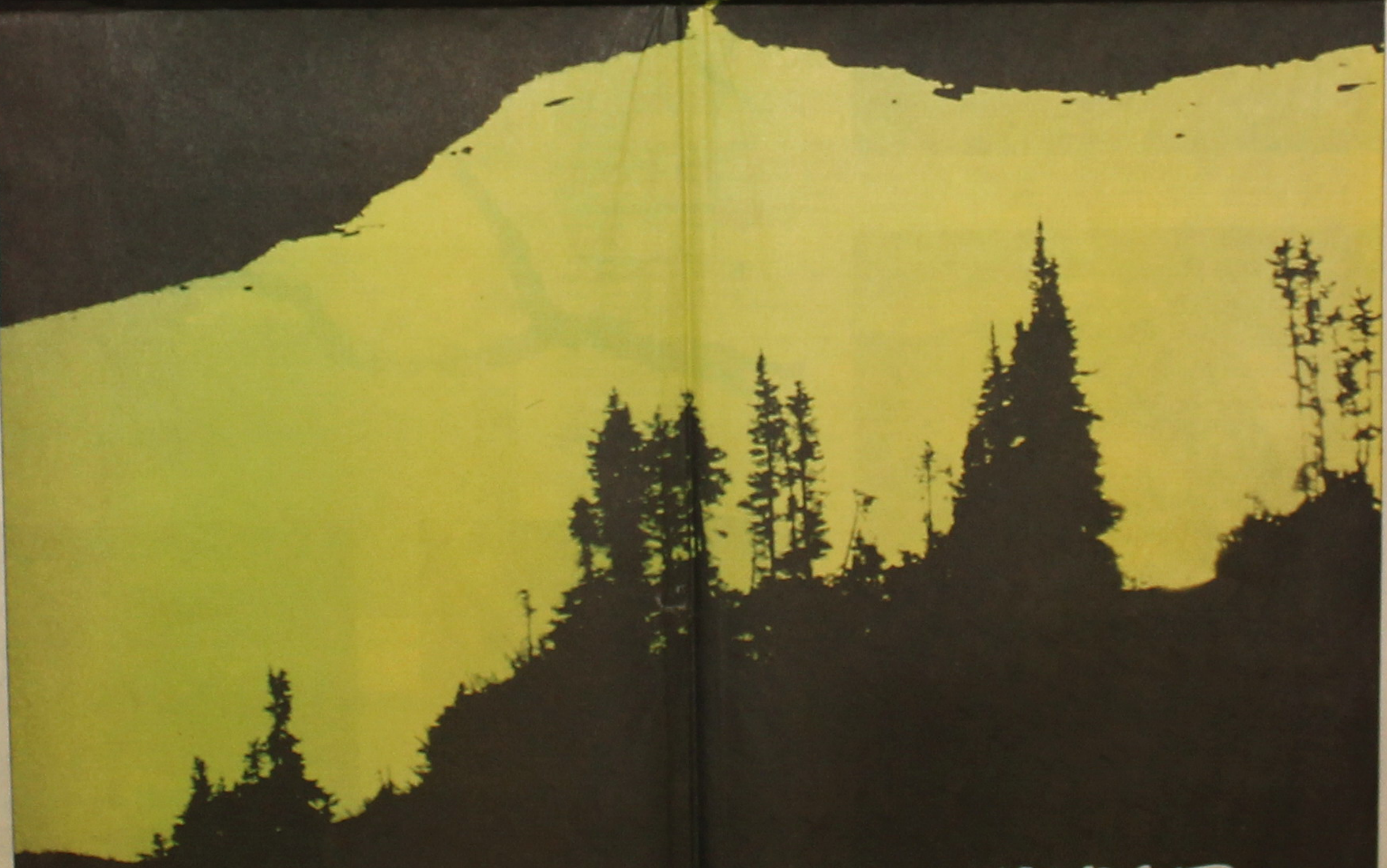




SAVE  
THE  
CARIBOO  
MOUNTAINS  
WILDERNESS

*watershed: entire basin area,  
defined by height of land,  
drained by a stream or  
lake system*



DREAM IT WHOLE



# JOIN THE PARKS

Protect the old growth heartland of the Cariboo Mountains. Link Bowron Lake Provincial Park to Wells Gray Provincial Park. Create one large protected ecosystem. Clearcut logging seriously threatens this fragile mountain environment. Keep it whole!



1 Upper Matthew River - Fall adds colour to the alpine meadows and riverine wetlands in this still wild region of the Matthew watershed.



2 Lower Matthew River Clearcuts - on the western boundary of the proposed Cariboo Mountains National Park Reserve, winter snow highlights the massive deforestation of the Matthew River Watershed.



3 Mückell Wetland at North Arm of Quesnel Lake - Although already compromised by a few clearcuts (note areas on the left) this valuable alluvial floodplain supports and maintains high densities of grizzly, waterfowl, and spawning sockeye salmon.



4 Clearwater River entering Hobson Lake - Hikers rest at height of land on the boundary between Wells Gray Park and the proposed Cariboo Mountains Park. The Summit Creek Trail accesses this spectacular view east.

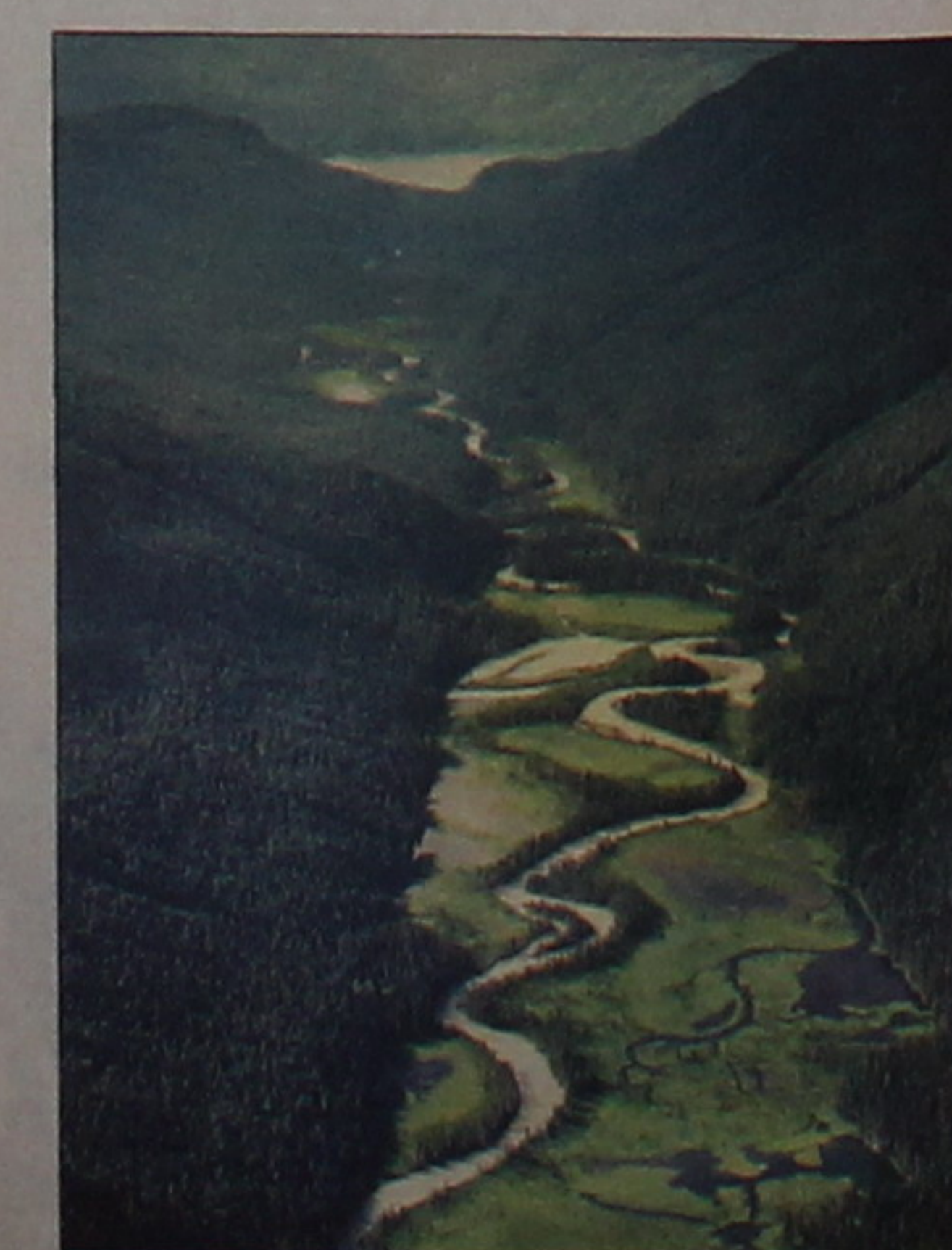


5 Blue Lead Watershed - West Fraser Mills' recently constructed logging road (lower centre of photo) penetrates 6 km into this previously untouched wilderness. Without a moratorium, old growth forest clearcutting will commence this fall.

The Proposed Bowron Lake Park Addition & Cariboo Mountains National Park Reserve



6 Niagara Falls - At the mouth of Niagara Creek, silt-laden waters thunder into British Columbia's deepest lake, Quesnel Lake.



7 Lower Niagara Wetland - Aerial view down Niagara Creek to the east arm of Quesnel Lake. Logging will destroy critical moose and grizzly habitat, and forever alter this irreplaceable ecosystem.



12 Wolverine River Clearcut - 1986 logging scars in the Wolverine River watershed are in full view to paddlers on Isaac Lake in Bowron Lake Park. This cut seriously undermines Bowron's inherent wilderness values.



11 Betty Wendle Pass - A hiker looks west toward the Betty Wendle Pass, where a high elevation logging road is planned to access Bowron's last two pristine watersheds, the Betty Wendle Creek and Upper Cariboo River.



10 Cariboo River Wetland - This wildlife-rich floodplain within Bowron Lake Park is threatened by proposed logging in the Upper Cariboo River, outside the current park boundaries.



9 Upper Niagara Wetland - Aerial view toward Niagara Creek's origin. Meltwaters from massive glaciers nestled in the mountains nearly 10,000 feet high, bring vital nutrients down to enrich the valley ecosystem below.

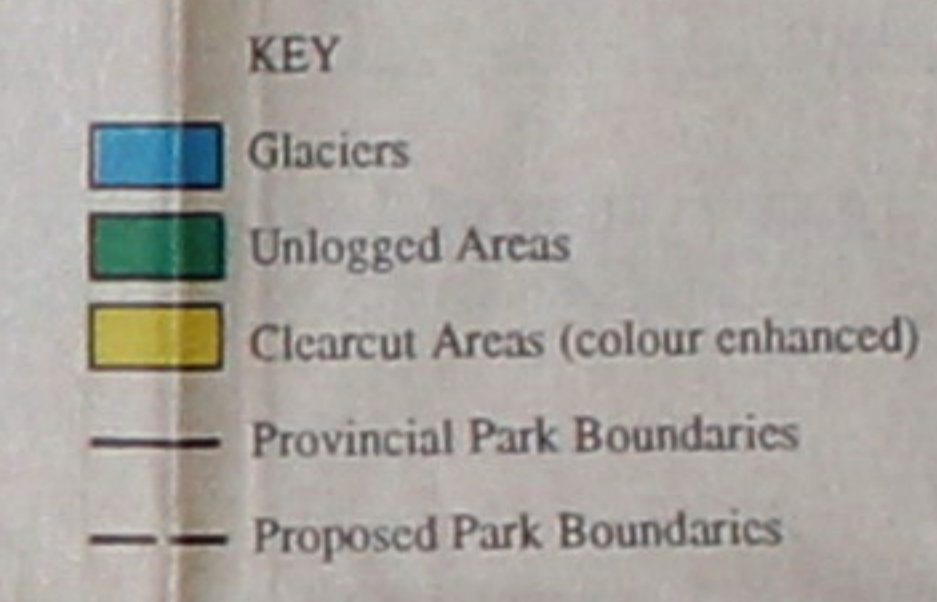


8 Subalpine Wetlands - Strong in the palm of nature; fragile in the hand of man.

The Cariboo Mountains Region from Space



Landsat Image created by Canada Centre for Remote Sensing - September 13, 1990



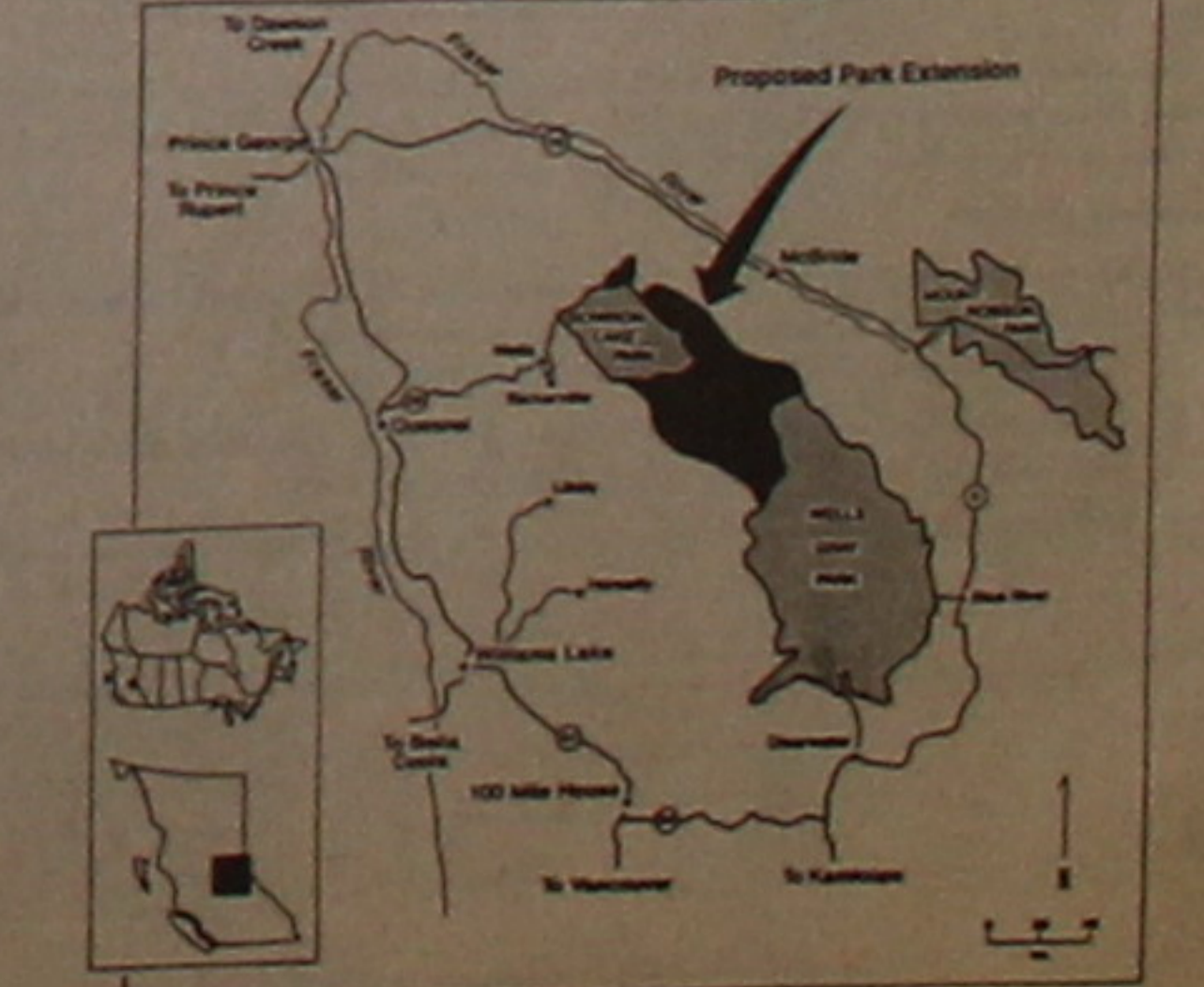
This image, taken 705 kilometres above the surface of the Earth, shows what is reputed to be the world's largest contiguous clearcut. This ecological disaster pushes to the northern boundary of Bowron Lake Park. Note that most of the low elevation forests are already cut, and logging is now moving into the less productive sub-alpine forests. A national park reserve joining Bowron Lake Provincial Park to Wells Gray Provincial Park will prevent clearcut logging from entering this critical biological corridor.

## UNITED THEY STAND

The Cariboo Mountains are located adjacent to the Rocky Mountains on the eastern edge of B.C.'s central dry interior. It is like no other place on earth. This rugged region is a vital part of the headwaters of the Fraser River, B.C.'s largest watershed, draining almost one-half of British Columbia. Sharp, ice-capped mountains rising to 10,000 feet above sea level trap large amounts of water. In the summer, frequent thunderstorms deposit torrents of rain, and in the winter, snow depths of 15 feet are common. This is B.C.'s interior wet belt. Water is what this place is all about. The interconnected lakes and rivers fed by the region's high precipitation allowed the indigenous peoples, the Carrier and Shuswap natives, to penetrate this seemingly impassable country. They prospered by hunting and fishing in the wildlife-rich rivers, lakes and wetlands. The Takulli peoples, literally "the people who go upon the water", regularly travelled the Bowron Lakes system. Sadly, like many of B.C.'s natives, the Takulli were wiped out by the smallpox virus brought by the early non-native explorers. Fortunately, the Cariboo Mountains' outstanding natural attributes have long been recognized. Today, there are two beautiful Class "A" provincial parks, Bowron Lakes and Wells Gray. Jointly they encompass 6,420 square kilometres of Cariboo Mountains wilderness. Bowron Lake Park was established in 1961. The Bowron's 116 kilometre chain of lakes is North America's most unique canoe circuit. Wells Gray Park was established in 1939. Delineated by height of land, it is B.C.'s third largest park, encompassing 520,000 ha. Together these parks offer a vast range of wilderness recreational opportunities. They are situated in the Cariboo Mountains Region only 30 kilometres apart from each other. Now as we plea for increased park protection in the region some people respond: "Isn't there more than enough park protection there already?" From a biological point of view the answer is a resounding "no". Neither of these two parks are of sufficient size to provide long term protection for the biodiversity of the area. What does this mean? Each park by itself has insufficient habitat to support enough large mammals to survive from generation to generation without inbreeding. Grizzlies, for example, can range over 1,000 square kilometres. Bowron is a mere 1,200 square kilometres. A recent study in Yoho National Park revealed that the minimum viable population for grizzly bear is approximately 350 adults. The 30 kilometre wide region which separate the two parks, if logged, will prevent continuous ranging and will keep the bear populations - the largest in British Columbia's interior - separated. Over time the two parks will inevitably lose their grizzlies. In the late summer, grizzlies congregate in large numbers to gorge on spawning sockeye salmon in the heart of Bowron Lake Park and in the rivers feeding into the north and east arms of Quesnel Lake. In 1989, an estimated 1.87 million sockeye returned to the Quesnel River system. This is a staggering figure given that the total Fraser River sockeye salmon inventory in 1989 was 3.1 million. Known for salmon and grizzlies, the Cariboo Mountains region also supports two of B.C.'s four remaining concentrations of woodland caribou, the east Prince George herd north of Bowron and the Quesnel Lake/Wells Gray herd. The caribou's survival hinges on protecting their primary habitat, the high elevation old growth forests, and the entire north-south movement corridor between the two parks. Despite a global and national commitment to the protection of earth's biodiversity, the B.C. provincial government is currently supporting logging plans which will forever sever Bowron from Wells Gray. Although the Ministry of Forests' proposed wilderness study area (see map) between the two parks is a step in the right direction, it favours industrial interests and does not recognize the importance of the whole ecological system. West Fraser Mills has plans to completely log the great cedar forests between Bowron Lake Park and Wells Gray Park. Since 1988, the company has logged Kildog Creek and built a six kilometre road into Blue Lead Creek (photo 5) with plans to extend the road to the bottom of Niagara Creek by late summer. Cutting in the "hydrologically unstable" Blue Lead watershed is scheduled to begin this fall. Never before has the Cariboo been under so much pressure. In an effort to save the Cariboo Mountains wilderness, the Cariboo Mountains Wilderness Coalition proposes a 60,000 hectare "Class A" provincial park addition to Bowron Lake Park. This addition will include the three eastern drainages feeding into Bowron Lake and complete the protection for the entire Bowron watershed. The coalition is also proposing a 160,000 ha. Cariboo Mountains National Park Reserve to "bridge the gap" between Bowron Lake Park and Wells Gray Park. These park proposals will not only enhance the ecological integrity of the two existing parks but will also create one, whole, much more secure wildlife refuge, one-third the size of Vancouver Island.

Few opportunities exist in this province to protect so much wilderness in exchange for so little additional land; to safeguard forever a natural area of Canadian, and global, significance.

We have critical land use decisions to make in British Columbia, and time is quickly running out. We must give top priority to completing our park system, with conservation being the driving mechanism - parks must be defined from an ecological systems perspective. Large areas linked with biological corridors, surrounded by adequate buffer zones and true sustainable resource use, will help to ensure a healthy environment. This "whole systems" approach includes preservation of valley bottoms, complete watersheds, old growth forests, wetlands etc., not just areas with beautiful scenery that are undesirable to industry.





# THE CARIBOO MOUNTAINS

## ENDANGERED WILDERNESS



Tim Cookman

Mountain goat



Woodland caribou - cow and newborn calf



Doug Radies

What took Nature centuries to grow took Man only minutes to cut down. Standing on this giant red cedar stump in the 'Starline Cedar Mills clearcut' beside the Mitchell Wetland - within the proposed Cariboo Mountains National Park Reserve - one can envision two possible futures:

preservation of the remaining old growth forest  
and the wildlife it houses and protects

or

continued clearcutting and loss of the area's rich biodiversity.

**It's up to you to help make the right choice!**



Doug Radies

Old growth red cedar



Doug Radies

Old growth interior cedar hemlock forest



Ohio Langner

Spawning sockeye salmon



Frank Culham

Male grizzly



Min. of Tourism

Bowron Lake



Moose



Ulli Augustin

Ptarmigan



Ulli Augustin

Western swallowtails



Vance Hanna

Ermine



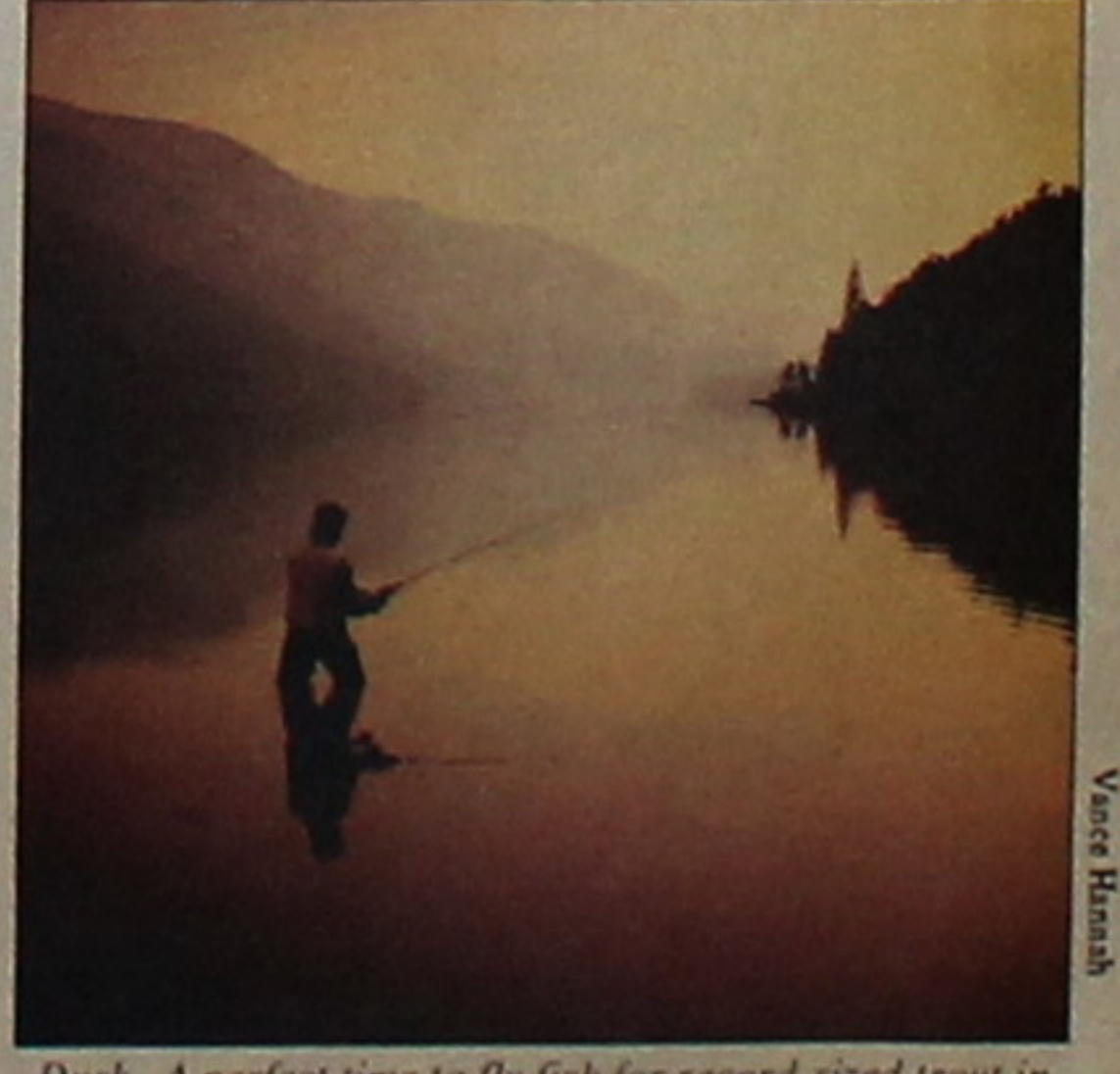
Min. of Tourism

Quesnel Lake



Vance Hanna

Ancient cedar trees over two metres in diameter and more than five hundred years old are common in the old growth wet belt forests of the Cariboo Mountains. Mitchell Lake.



Vance Hanna

Dusk. A perfect time to fly fish for record-sized trout in the remote wilderness lakes of the proposed Cariboo Mountains National Park Reserve. Mitchell Lake.

### With your help, we will preserve the Cariboo Mountains

Government action can immediately halt further road building and clearcut logging in the Cariboo Mountains' forest.

Write to: Jean Charest  
Minister of the Environment  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
Canada  
K1A 0A6

Premier of BC  
Legislative Buildings  
Victoria, BC  
Canada  
V8V 1X4

Express your concern about the need to extend Bowron's boundaries and to establish the Cariboo Mountains National Park Reserve between Bowron Lake Provincial Park and Wells Gray Provincial Park. Send a copy to us at our address below.

### Keep the Cariboo Mountains Wild & Rugged!

#### The Cariboo Mountains Need Protection

I support: The expansion of Bowron Lake Provincial Park to include the Wolverine, Betty Wendle and Upper Cariboo River watersheds and the creation of a Cariboo Mountains National Park Reserve to join Bowron Lake Provincial Park with Wells Gray Provincial Park.

#### Please find enclosed:

- My tax deductible donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to WCWC "The Cariboo Mountains Fund" to help continue the fight to save the Cariboo Mountains. (Revenue Canada Tax Registration #0587113-21-28)
- Copies of my letters to the Federal Minister of the Environment and to the Premier of BC expressing my concerns about this critical land use issue.
- \$10 for a detailed information package on the proposal to link Bowron to Wells Gray.

Mail to:  
Western Canada Wilderness  
Committee (WCWC)  
20 Water Street  
Vancouver BC  
Canada  
V6B 1A4

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_  
Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your concern and support!



Betty Wendle 1867-1970

This publication is dedicated to Betty Wendle, an early Cariboo pioneer. Betty and her husband Joe were among the first people to recognize the Cariboo Mountains' recreational potential and the need for the conservation of this area.

We gratefully recognize the following for their support, generous financial contributions, donated services and time: Mountain Equipment Co-op, Coulee Resources, B.C. Fishing Resorts and Outfitters, United Church Environment Working Unit, Friends of Wells Gray, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Western Canoeing, Mike Wiegale Helicopter Skiling and Vance Hanna of Image West. Color scans by: Pacific Image Color. Cover photo: Quesnel Lake by Ulli Augustin.

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#### Cariboo Mountains Wilderness Coalition - CMWC

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