

NANOOSE BAY FOREST APPROVED

The Western Canada Wilderness Committee's Mid Island Chapter is hosting a New Year's Day Hot Drink-in and guided tour of Nanoose Bay's DL 33 forest wetlands.

The group is expecting a strong community reaction to the signing-off of a cutting permit for the forest just three days before Christmas.

"The unthinkable has happened," Wilderness Committee spokesperson Annette Tanner said in a news release Tuesday. "By signing off the cutting

permit for the endangered forest, one bureaucratic error is now being buried by a second bureaucratic error that could see the end of one of the last stands of public Coastal Douglas-fir forests in the province.

"The Ministry of Environment failed to identify this forest as a Coastal Douglas-fir forest (CDFmm), which meant that instead of being included in the provincial government's recent Land Use Order to protect the remaining CDFmm forests on public land, as these forests are in

high risk of extinction, the decision for the future of this forest was shuffled off to the Ministry of Forest for logging."

Tanner said the group is also "alarmed that the approval for logging was granted before the Forest Practice Board's investigation into three complaints launched by the public that address sustainability issues for that forest."

The public is invited to meet for the New Year's Day guided tour and hot drinks at 1 p.m. at the Nanoose Bay Petrocan station on the corner of the

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Inland Island Highway and Northwest Bay Road.

The tour is an easy 1-2 hour walk but will require boots as creeks and wetlands are at their high water mark. This is a 'Bring Your Own Mug' event and is free to the public.

For more information, call 250-752-6585.