



*Before: Forest around Langford Lake Cave  
Photo: Pete Rockwell*



*After: Forest and Langford Lake Cave destroyed,  
Photo: Pete Rockwell*

## **Wasteland: Bear Mountain Interchange** by Ingmar Lee, 11 March 2008

**Here finally, is Langford Mayor Stew Young's great victory over the environment.**

On February 13th, 2008, morning commuters into Victoria on the Trans-Canada Highway were surprised to see a massive, centrally orchestrated 70-agent RCMP SWAT-team in action assaulting the Bear Mountain Treesit, which had been blockading the construction of Mayor Young's signature project.

The Bear Mountain Interchange was needed to facilitate expansion of the sprawling Bear Mountain golf and condo development which was exceeding the capacity of existing access infrastructure. No sooner had the cops secured the 10 month protest site, giant tree-chomping faller bunchers immediately tore into the forest. By the evening commute, traffic ground to a halt through the destruction zone as large trees crashed down along the highway.

As people idled by, they saw an enormous swath already slashed through the forest. Over the next days, guarded by a 24/7 RCMP roster which was said to have consisted of 300 officers on rotating shifts, motorists watched as tracked machines clamped hydraulically onto mature, budding Garry oaks and tore them right out of the ground.

Now all the "overburden" has been stumped and scraped right off, and is ready for blasting. With numerous Bear Mountain properties now languishing unsold for lengthy periods, the consortium is frantically, desperately flailing away at their giant cloverleaf interchange, ~ without official BC Ministry of Environment approval, and without official Archaeology Branch approval, and without even financial approval.

There is no guarantee that Stew Young will be able to borrow \$25,000,000 of tax-payers money, so that he can lend it to the developers so they can build their interchange. (Of course, if you or I decided we had this great get-rich-fast scheme to build a huge condo-project in the back yard and smash a big access road to it, ~ like the first stop is going to be mayor and council to borrow the money!?! Hey, I'll pay it back in ten years!)

The destruction has attracted a voracious feeding frenzy of rednecked vinyl-stapling contractors who abjectly genuflect to Bear Mountain #2, Les Bjola, and incite and bribe their servants to form a 100-man, vigilante lynch-mob to assault peaceful, legitimate and necessary civil dissent.

All sorts of shady quasi-legal Bear Mountain related fanangling are now being exposed, and a stench of corruption grows ever more putrid. The leaks have become a stream which will likely become a torrent. Meanwhile, in a powerful demonstration of grass-roots pressure on municipal power, 9 of 13 CRD communities rejected Bear Mountain's bid to get city water and sewer services.

Victoria's, ~Canada's progressive community, -by far a majority, are greatly concerned and understand the fact of the global ecological catastrophe. Bear Mountain is anathema to anyone who cares a damn about the planet, -even their children. People are outraged and they're now mobilized. Could still be a while till the Hummers, come idling through this giant scar on the Earth from where they now idle.