

## OUTDOORS

# Far more than a mere manic Monday

## March 7 was a day of environmental decision

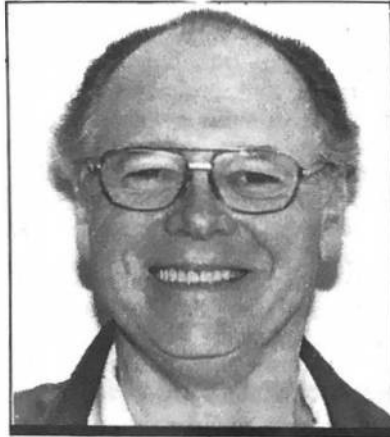
Some days, in the activities of man, stand out as significant in the changes we impose on ourselves and the natural systems impacted by these activities. In the small arena of British Columbia, and smaller still Vancouver Island, and finally the Comox Valley, Monday, March 7 was a day of change, turmoil, exultation, and frustration. The events creating these varying degrees of emotion took place in Vancouver (at the Court House at a press conference), and in Victoria from a press release.

The events I refer to occurred in this order. A press announcement by the Hon. Stan Hagen, that \$600,000 has been allotted to deal with the problems of acid mine drainage from Mount Washington which has destroyed the Tsolum River. This is a major step toward bringing this beautiful river system back into production.

It is the result of many months, days and hours of work by Father Charles Brandt and the Comox Valley chapter of the Steelhead Society. Much happiness and success is felt by all members of the Valley, although the work to solve the problem still remains. There is now significant funding to start the job. The fervent hope and prayer of all concerned is that there will be no delays, getting on with the task of rehabilitating the Tsolum River system.

The second event took place in a courtroom where a judge struck down the predator control program on timber wolves in northeastern British Columbia. The active lobbyists of small minority groups with single-minded goals, are creating havoc with our ability to manage predators in wild populations.

We should find sane ways to control irresponsible media



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manipulators that are driven by narrow personal goals that have little to do with the balanced resource management and use.

To illustrate this situation, we have a population of 1,467 California sea lions (counted last Saturday) hauling out on the log booms at Harmac Pulp Mill, Nanaimo. We have a harbor seal population of 60,000 which is in

creasing annually by the thousands. These predators are devastating our fish stocks and we stand powerless, while anarchists continue to destroy our politicians' will to act.

The third event that has created nothing but frustration, is the press release by the Hon. Tom Siddon, on changes in management of the Strait of Georgia Chinook salmon fishery. At this writing I do not have the details of the program in hand, so I will give only some short impressions.

The proposed two-per-day, eight per season in the recreational fishery, does little to address the real problem. The announced tag system will create chaos in management and distribution until it is finally thrown out. In the meantime it should satisfy the ego of our minister, because he implemented the regulations in spite of advice from his own staff and all user groups.

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To end on a positive note, the following dates are of paramount importance to all first-time hunting licence applicants. In order

for you to qualify for a hunter number you must first take and successfully pass the Conservation Outdoor Recreation Education Program (CORE). Members of the Courtenay Fish and Game Protection Association who are, CORE qualified instructors will be offering the program on the following dates - April 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14 from 7-9:30 p.m. each evening at the clubhouse.