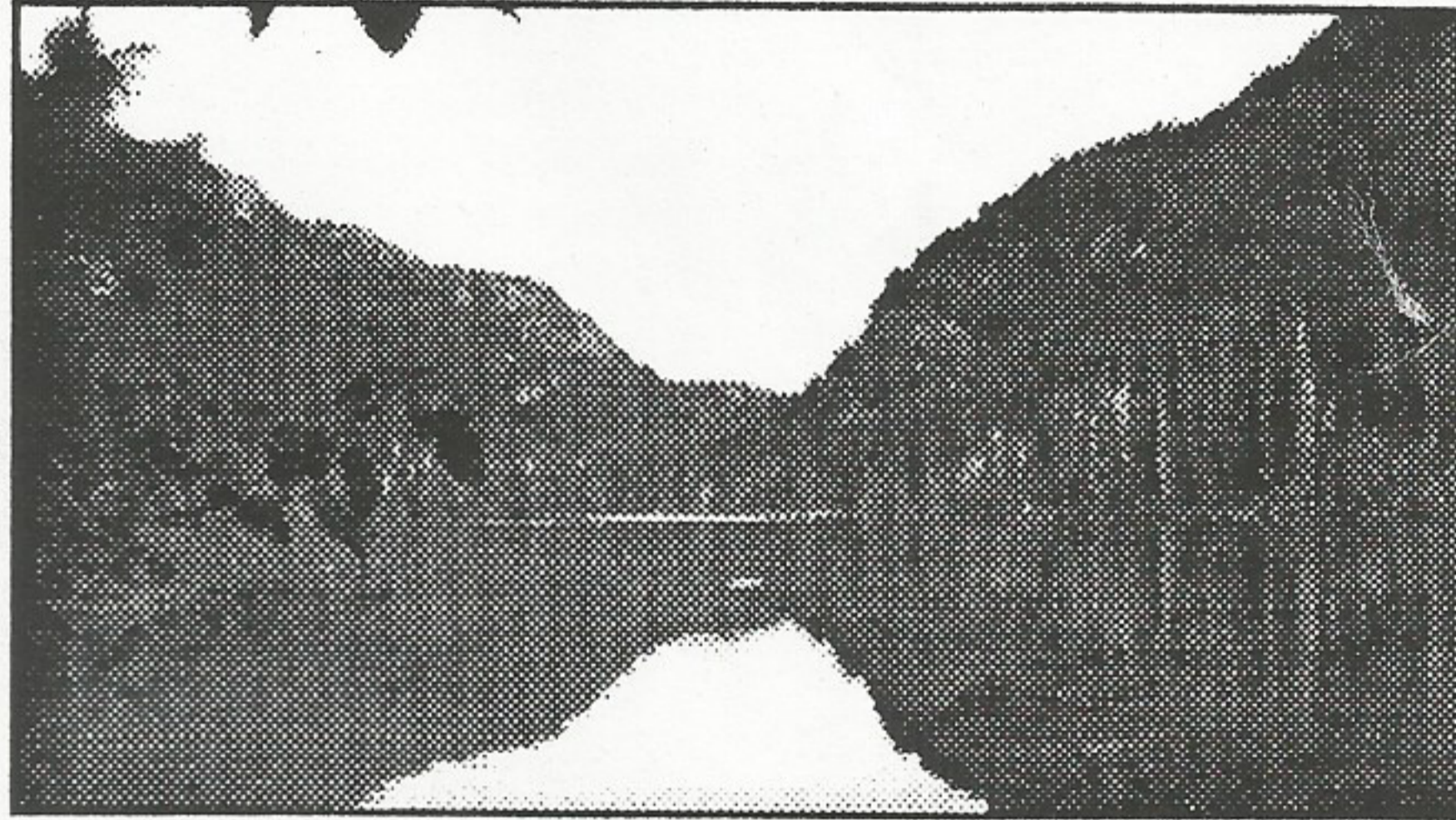




## PEARL LAKE IN PERIL



The headwaters of any watershed is extremely important to the watershed as a whole, especially if it is subject to harvesting by the big forestry companies. What happens in the headwaters is reflected in every portion of the downstream sections of a river, even the estuary itself.

The ORES has had considerable input in bringing Divers and Rossiter Lakes into park status to form part of the 13 percent of the land base as proposed by the government under the Goal II Plan. Even though the status of these lakes at the headwaters of Piggott Creek, the principle tributary of the Oyster River - has been passed by legislature, it has not yet been publicly announced. We have been assured

that it is only a matter of time. Pearl Lake is our present concern. This lake, formed by small streams flowing out of Strathcona Park, lies at the top end of the Oyster River, some 28 miles (44.8) from the estuary. It lies at an altitude of 2900 feet

and is surrounded by mountains to a height of 6500 feet. Hugging her shores is a splendid coverage of old growth timber, principally Douglas Fir, Hemlock, Cedar and Balsam. Hermit Thrushes sing in the low understorage, and trout are relatively

abundant in the lake. The lake is part of the watershed consisting of 376 km<sup>2</sup>. The Oyster is joined by several tributaries: Norm, Adrian, Piggott, Wowo, Little Oyster, Woodhus, and Bear Creeks. The mainstem Oyster River is accessible to salmonids up to a series of falls located 24 kilometers above the mouth.

We have always taken it for granted that Pearl Lake would assume Park status and thus gain protection. Somehow it missed the Goal II planning. Now some logging in the area is being anticipated by MacMillan Bloedel, perhaps not clearcut logging, but some logging nevertheless. It is the author's opinion that Pearl Lake should remain in its pristine state. Any suggestion as to how Pearl Lake can be protected would be welcomed.

November 15, 1998

**Father Charles Brandt**

CHAIR, Watershed Protection Committee, ORES

## VOLUNTEER REPORT

Has anyone not been out to the hatchery on a recent Tuesday? I went out last week to conduct a tour of 1st and 2nd graders from Penfield Elementary and the activity was incredible. People moving everywhere. Nets, hammers, plastic buckets in hand, you name it, there were people doing projects wherever I looked. Needless to say, it made impressing a group of school kids easy, not to mention the teachers and parents who accompany these classes. It's gotten to the point as volunteer coordinator that I don't know who to thank; Frank for organizing the free for all, Jitka who holds the society together, or the volunteers who seem to be having such a great time. In any event, if you haven't been there already, don't let another Tuesday slip by without giving this volunteer open house a try. Just show up by 8:45 with waders or rubber boots, gloves and rain gear and I guarantee



Fly fishing for fun and sport is the emphasis of the Comox Valley Fly Fishing Club. Staying away from politics whenever possible, the club is interested in cooperating with such organizations as ORES for the betterment of fish populations in our Valley.

The past year has seen volunteers from the CVFFC work jointly with the ORES to develop new fish habitat on the Oyster and assist with the handling of spawning salmon. While local outdoor writers do much to raise public awareness concerning the plight of Valley fish species, it takes the type of cooperation shown by these two groups to increase dwindling fish stocks. Mutual support can only lead to increased benefits.

As part of their commitment to public education, the CVFFC has invited Mr. Kays Groot, a retired DFO anthropologist/come fish biologist/come