

## **Press release - Non-Timber Forest Products**

### **Non - Timber Forest Products and Sustainable Forest Management**

The West Island Woodlands Advisory Group is pleased to present the 2nd in a series of seminars addressing Sustainable Forest Management. In a continuing effort of education and public involvement we are presenting a panel discussion looking at the issue of non-timber forest products, their relation to Sustainable Forestry and the involvement of the citizens of the Alberni Valley in the utilization of these resources.

Here is a question. Who actually owns non-timber forest products? Will there come a day when a license will be required to pick mushrooms, perhaps a permit to pick salal. Access to these resources to date has only been limited to the desire of the person to reach them; however, regulations may soon change, opening the way for forest companies to have actual ownership of these non-timber forest products. Would this be a good thing?

What is the economic potential of these non-timber forest products? There is a global demand for the non-timber resources that come from the West Coast of Vancouver Island. Chanterelles are sold in Germany, salal in New York, what are the opportunities for local entrepreneurs and harvesters of these resources?

What does Weyerhaeuser want? Does the company want control of these non-timber resources that lie within the Tree Farm License #44? If so, what will be the implications for local businesses, harvesters and individuals?

Many a business has been founded upon the utilization of those resources that lie within the forest land base, but this resource has been largely ignored. There are the well known mushroom and salal picking activities, whether recreational or commercial. However, this is not the true extent of the resources that lie within. The forest provides a vast treasure trove of resources that are utilized by a wide range of individuals and businesses. We are seeking to expand on the issue of non-timber forest products by bringing in expertise from a wide range of specialties. Building on information from the Ministry of Forests, Weyerhaeuser, Royal Roads University College as well as other sources we will begin to look at how these resources, the access to them as well as their economic potential could be developed in the Alberni Valley.

All are invited to attend. Please come and provide your input on this issue. The panel presentation will be held from 7 - 9:30pm at Echo Centre's Dogwood Room. For further information please contact Ryan at 723-5782.