



Caravan raises awareness

by Sue Stephenson

On Sunday, March 2, a meeting was held in Charlottetown for people interested in learning more about the conservation controversy surrounding South Moresby, the lower 15% of the Queen Charlotte Islands archipelago in British Columbia, or about the 'Save South Moresby Caravan', soon to begin. At the meeting, approximately 50 people learned from Thom Henley and Gregg Sheehy, two of the caravan organizers, about the pressure many groups such as the Islands Protection Society in Vancouver and the Canadian Nature Federation were putting on the B.C. government to have this area declared a National Park to conserve it for future generations, and to prevent clear-cut logging and mining from taking place. They also talked about the many reasons why that area, in particular, was vital to protect. From an environmental and biological viewpoint it is one of the most unique areas in the world, being the home of the world's largest concentration of the rare Peale's peregrine falcon, containing the largest nesting concentrations of bald eagles in Canada, the location of one quarter of all the nesting seabirds on the Canadian Pacific coast, home to more than one half of Canada's Stellers sea lions... the list goes on and on. From a cultural stance, South Moresby contains several hundred archeological sites, including a UNESCO world heritage site, and is home to the Haida Indians, residents of the Queen Charlotte Islands for over 10,000 years.

Since many groups had been working within B.C. for over 12 years trying to have the area preserved, and with the threat of logging growing closer every year, it was decided that the issue had to become a national one to finally persuade the B.C. government to protect the area. The method decided upon was the 'Save South Moresby Caravan', a group of people travelling by train from Newfoundland to British Columbia, with awareness rallies and meetings being held in several major cities along the way, such as Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, and Winnipeg.

It wasn't until after the meeting in Charlottetown, less than a week before the caravan was due to leave St. John's that people got together and decided that a P.E.I. representative should go and that I, as the Atlantic Co-ordinator, should be the one. Through group and individual donations, the cost of my train fare was covered, and off I went to connect with the caravan in Moncton.

western contact:
Save South Moresby Committee
620 View Street, Room 315
Victoria, B.C. V8W 1J4
Thom Henley (604) 389-1544

SAVE SOUTH MORESBY CARAVAN



eastern contact:
Canadian Nature Federation
75 Albert Street, Suite 203
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6G1
Gregg Sheehy (613) 238-6154