
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

March 21, 2005

Editor
Kelowna Daily Courier

Dear Editor:

I found your March 9 article “Not enough eyes in the forest. . .” puzzling.

The Ministry of Forests has a strong and effective compliance and enforcement program made up of 275 professional and highly-trained staff. These enforcement officers are dedicated full-time to this activity, which is a change from 1999 when enforcement was done on a part-time basis.

We focus our enforcement activities in high-risk areas, and this approach is working. Our enforcement officers conduct more than 16,000 inspections a year – almost 50 inspections a day – to make sure people are complying with forest laws. Where we find problems, we act. Each year, fines and penalties amounting to about \$650,000 are assessed, in addition to prosecutions for the most serious forest crimes.

Forest Service staff have been and will continue to be the public’s eyes and ears in the woods.

Yours sincerely,

Michael de Jong
Minister of Forests