



turned monitoring over to the forest companies themselves. While studies may be required to determine logging will not threaten downstream values, those studies are conducted by the companies. FCC describes these as "joint" studies with government agencies.

Several hours drive from Tofino along a dirt road lies the Carmanah Valley. As recently as four years ago the valley was just part of an enormous tree farm licence of 453,000 ha owned by MacMillan Bloedel. It was the discovery of the Carmanah Giant - the Sitka spruce 95 metres tall and 9.6 metres around - that galvanised conservation group the Western Canada Wilderness Committee and others into action to spare the 6,700 ha valley from the chainsaw.

WCWC campaigner Joe Foy's passion for the Carmanah is belied by his easygoing exterior. Strolling through a clearcut at the head of the valley, he explains WCWC's strategy for saving the forest.

### Word came out

He says that as soon as word came out about the size and extent of the big trees in the valley, a photograph was taken and made into the most popular poster the group had ever printed. Volunteers and staff then created a boardwalk into the forest, and a research station was set up high in the canopy - the first research carried out at that height on the rainforests of British Columbia.

In 1989 a number of artists were invited

into the valley to interpret it as they wished. The resulting book - *Carmanah: Artistic Visions of an Ancient Rainforest* - was a bestseller and award winner. In two short years the valley had emerged from obscurity into the spotlight of national concern.

By 1990 a pressured Government acceded to environmental demands, creating the Carmanah Pacific Provincial Park to protect 3,600 ha in the lower half of the watershed. But it was a compromise that satisfied no-one, and the stand-off remains over the remaining unprotected forest.

This weekend Joe Foy and the score of volunteers he has organised are in the second phase of the Phoenix Project. The first phase started several weeks beforehand with repair work to damage caused by vandals in October 1990 when they destroyed a large section of the boardwalk and burned the research camp during a loggers' blockade of the main road. In spring 1991 WCWC rebuilt the camp and now they are working on repairing the boardwalk. "They can come in and destroy the place 15 times; we'll rebuild it a 16th time," says Foy.

In the argument over the Carmanah Valley the heat is off Fletcher Challenge, for this is in competing company MacMillan Bloedel's tree farm; nevertheless FCC are bracing themselves for an impending clash over a neighbouring valley, the Walbran, where they do have a TFL. There the trees are every bit as grand as in the more celebrated Carmanah. Foy shows me the area where a marbled murrelet nest was recently sighted. WCWC, he says, intends to build a research site here as well.



The waters around Vancouver Island were once thick with cetaceans. Today the most numerous are orcas which feed on salmon in the coastal waters. Photo: Adrian Dorst. Inset: By 1900 sea otters had been virtually wiped out, victims of human greed for their luxuriant pelts. In the early 1970s, 89 were reintroduced to Vancouver Island, their numbers growing to 500 by 1990. Photo: Adrian Dorst



Dorothy Baert, Tofino tourism entrepreneur and Chamber of Commerce member: "Our trees are simply cash flow." Photo: Gerard Hutching