

Carole James calls for Hamilton Marsh protection

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The leader of B.C.'s official opposition this week got on board a push to protect Hamilton Marsh from future logging.

During a tour of the Qualicum Beach-area wetland Friday, James stressed the need to protect the marsh — and a significant buffer of trees around it — in order to protect drinking water in French Creek and the wildlife that use the marsh.

"I don't think there's any question," James said when asked if the wetland should be saved from future development. "If you take a look at the ecosystem and take a look at its importance, I don't think there's any question. If you look at the area around, the pressure is huge. Most of it has been eaten away already. You're talking about saving what's left. I think it's critical."

James praised the community for their efforts to preserve the wetland, which is owned by Island Timberlands.

"For the community to come together like this shows the extraordinary level of commitment to the issue," James said. "It's time the environment minister came in and assisted. The community has done its part and the municipality and the regional district have done their part. There's only one voice missing at the table."

The Regional District of Nanaimo and Ducks Unlimited, along with the Friends of French Creek and others have attempted to purchase the land from Island Timberlands, but to date have had no success.

