

MLA wades in to marsh debate

By Fred Davies - Parksville Qualicum Beach News - November 13, 2007



scott fraser ... environment ministry must help out with Hamilton Marsh issue

Scott Fraser calls on Penner to take an active role

Provincial Environment Minister Barry Penner is being asked to intervene in wake of Island Timberlands decision to back out of negotiations regarding efforts to turn Hamilton Marsh into protected regional parkland.

In correspondence to the ministry Alberni-Qualicum MLA Scott Fraser writes "Local frustration is palpable ... Barry I invite you to join me and local advocates for a tour of the marshland to see for yourself how precious and important Hamilton Marsh is to the region."

Fraser said "private managed forest land companies are becoming the biggest realtors on the Island ... At this point a meeting with the minister is essential."

Fraser expressed concern with the lack of consideration given to ecosystem management and protection at a time when some private forestry companies are in the process of selling large tracts of land in areas across the Island.

He said he's submitted thousands of signatures from individuals intent on protecting the 37 hectare marsh, a noted avian brooding area located just south of Qualicum Beach.

"I believe the Ministry of Environment should and must play a strong role here," he said. "It's a special place. I love it and am a birder myself."