

Takla find new reason to blockade

The Takla First Nation leadership says it is fed up with Canfor's herbicide spraying program on their traditional territory yesterday and escalated their blockade to 71 kilometers on the Driftwood Forest Service Road.

The councillors say they have a clear agreement with Canfor and BC Environment that bans spraying on traditional territory.

"We are very serious and concerned with the health of our people which Canfor and BC Environment are well aware of," says Chief Lana Teegee. "We will continue to stand up for our rights and interests in our traditional territory."

Canfor communications manager Lee Coonfer says the company had already reduced the total acres to be sprayed this summer from 1,200 to 300 acres and had made agreement with the band to inform them when spraying would take effect.

He says the acres need spraying to destroy broad leaf undergrowth that stops seedlings from regenerating.

"We gave the Takla advance warning and our crews started spraying Monday," says Mr. Coonfer.

He says spraying stopped that night — as soon as the Takla called them.

The Takla are escalating the month-long blockade anyway, saying Canfor's decision to spray herbicide violates principles of open, active decision-making.

Mr. Coonfer hopes the two parties can come to some sort of a working agreement when they meet today.

"We're hopeful that our contractors and subcontractors will be back at work soon," he says.

The band is also blockading a BC Rail station.

Long/Ride



About 50 racers took part in the annual 12 Hours of Otway race at the Otway Nordic Ski Centre, noon Saturday until midnight. BRAD NEEDHAM/FREE PRESS

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Child prostitution trial set for October start

With the help of the province's Associate Chief Justice, two city men facing allegations they lived off the avails of child prostitutes will get an early trial.

Two and a half weeks ago, Ryan Arnold Schnepf, 21, and Robert Allan Dow, 26, were ordered to stand trial in B.C. Supreme Court at the conclusion of their preliminary hearing. They will go to trial on a total of 25 charges, everything ranging from sex assault to living off the avails of child prostitution.

The two men will have a trial in B.C. Supreme Court before a judge alone, and

because it is expected to take longer than 10 days, there needs to be a pre-trial conference with the Associate Chief Justice.

Upon learning that Mr. Schnepf and Mr. Dow had both been committed to trial and were in custody, Associate Chief Justice Patrick Dohm stated: "We better get on with it."

The trial is now slated to begin on October 30.



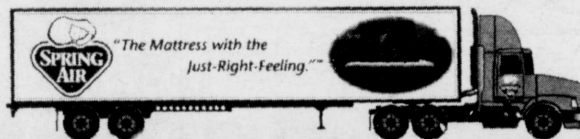
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