



Driving directions to the Avatar Grove, Red Creek Fir, San Juan Spruce, Harris Creek Spruce, & Big Lonely Doug!

Port Renfrew, on the west coast of Vancouver Island, is the "Big Trees Capital" of Canada. Close to this charming little sea-side town grows the world's largest living Douglas-fir tree, the massive Red Creek fir, as well as the newly found "Big Lonely Doug"; Canada's second largest Douglas-fir. They are wonders to behold. En route to the Red Creek Fir is Canada's largest Sitka spruce, the San Juan Spruce, its massive limbs draped with mosses and ferns. Also close by is the amazing Avatar Grove, the "Cathedral Grove of Port Renfrew". Farther north are the magnificent ancient rainforests of Carmanah Valley Provincial Park, the partially protected Walbran Valley, and Pacific Rim National Park Reserve, home to Canada's largest tree, the Cheewhat Cedar.

The world-renowned Avatar Grove, just a 20 minute drive from Port Renfrew along good gravel roads, has become a major tourist destination since it was found and popularized in 2010. It was protected from logging in 2012 after a 2 year campaign involving the Ancient Forest Alliance, Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce, local businesses, BC citizens, and more.

In Spring 2013, work began to construct a boardwalk to help protect the area's delicate understory vegetation and tree roots from excessive trampling, improve visitor safety and access, and support local ecotourism. To help complete this vital boardwalk project please donate at: www.AncientForestAlliance.org/boardwalk-donation.php

Red Creek Fir: World's Largest Douglas-fir

GPS for Red Creek Fir parking: Lat = 48.57990; Lon = -124.22639
The Red Creek Fir measures 13.3m (43.7 ft) in circumference, 4.3m (14 ft) in diameter, and 73.8m (242 ft) tall. The Red Creek Fir has been estimated to be about 750 years to 1,000 years old. This tree is a survivor of a stand of Douglas-firs that became established sometime after a forest fire that occurred ca. 635 A.D.



Avatar Grove is filled with some of Canada's largest western redcedars and Douglas-firs. Many of the cedars have massive, odd-shaped "burls" growing on their trunks, including "Canada's Gnarliest Tree" found in the Upper Avatar Grove. The Grove is home to bears, wolves, cougars, deer, and elk. It is found in the Pacheedaht First Nations' traditional territory.

Already 90% of the ancient forests on southern Vancouver Island have been logged. These forests are important for endangered species, clean water, the climate, tourism, and many First Nations cultures.

The Ancient Forest Alliance, a non-profit organization, is working with local businesses to protect the last remaining pockets of old-growth forests in the Port Renfrew region and to ensure the sustainable logging of second-growth forests. To help protect these forests please sign our petition at: www.AncientForestPetition.com and visit our website at: www.AncientForestAlliance.org

Please also support local businesses to show them the benefits of old-growth forest protection, such as the Coastal Kitchen Café, Soule Creek Lodge, Big Fish Lodge, Renfrew Ritz, Handsome Dan's Wild Coast Guest Cottages, Homestead Cabins, Port Renfrew Pub, Port Renfrew Marina & RV Park, Pacheedaht Campground, the General Store, and many more! Enjoy your trip and please always treat the land & beings with respect :)

Note! Gas & diesel are only available in town between May & mid Oct. at the Port Renfrew Marina, 8-5pm, 7 d/w.

Driving Directions from Port Renfrew to Red Creek Fir (one way driving time about 1 hour)

1. km 0.0 - start at the Port Renfrew Community Center/Fire Station and drive down Deering Rd 0.2 km
2. km 0.2 - continue over single lane bridge 1.1 km
3. km 1.4 - turn right at fork and continue for 1.4 km
4. km 2.7 - cross Deering Bridge and turn right (***To reach Avatar Grove, turn left instead then follow directions on opposite page. Also watch for signs posted on trees.**) and proceed 8.6 km towards Lake Cowichan and Lizard Lake
5. km 11.2 - keep right at Renfrew Creek Bridge and continue 4.6 km
6. km 15.7 - turn right at 9 Mile Junction onto Len's Creek Main (**start of gravel road) to bridge
7. km 15.9 - cross bridge and proceed 2.2 km
8. km 18.0 - turn right at fork (Len's Triangle) onto Bear Main for 0.3 km
9. km 18.4 - cross bridge and continue 2.0 km to San Juan Campground and San Juan Sitka Spruce (Canada's Largest)
10. km 20.2 - continue straight 1.8 km past the San Juan Spruce
11. km 22.1 - turn right at Mosquito Creek Main for 2.4 km
12. km 24.5 - keep right 1.3 km past "T" in the road
13. km 25.8 - keep right 0.7 km past fork
14. km 26.5 - continue straight 3.3 km on Red Creek Main at fork (**Do Not Take Branch Red 2000 on your left.**)
15. km 29.8 - turn right at "T" onto discontinued logging road for 1 km and find the start of the trail where the road widens on both sides. It is a 10-15 minute hike to the Red Creek Fir, the largest living Douglas-fir tree in the world!

**Please take note regarding driving to the Red Creek Fir:

The gravel logging roads from Len's Main on are rarely maintained or not maintained at all. Use at your own risk & drive defensively. It is recommended that you have a full tank of gas, a working spare tire, and that you know how to change a flat. It's always wise when travelling in the backcountry to let someone know where you intend to go and when you will be back. **There is ZERO cell reception in Port Renfrew and the surrounding areas!** In the event you have car trouble, stay with your vehicle. It is best to visit the Red Creek Fir in the morning as the road is rarely travelled after dark. Those driving rental vehicles should be aware of rental contracts regarding travel on logging roads. **This route is not recommended for vehicles with low clearance** (compact cars, sub compacts, sports cars, etc.) SUVs, Pickups, and 4x4's are best!!

Map by Geoffrey Senichenko. Photos by TJ Watt.

Reproduced by the Ancient Forest Alliance in 2014.

Printed on 100% PCW recycled paper using vegetable based inks

For more local info visit: www.PortRenfrewCommunity.com

***The Ancient Forest Alliance, its staff, and directors, assume no liability for one's safety or belongings while driving or hiking and using this map or directions as a guide.

These are remote wilderness areas - travel and hike at your OWN RISK!!

*Directions to Avatar Grove

(continued from Red Creek Fir Direction #4 - on left)

5. Once you've turned LEFT after Deering Bridge, stay on the mostly-paved Gordon River Main road and after approximately 5 km or so it will become gravel and you will hit a "Y" where you go LEFT and cross a high bridge over the beautiful Gordon River.
6. After crossing the bridge keep on the Gordon River Main for about 1.5 km, staying to the RIGHT at the next "Y".
7. Shortly after you will cross a small bridge over a creek (Baird Creek). Park on the right immediately after the bridge and look for the trail entrance signs that lead to the Upper and Lower Groves.
8. The trail on the left side of the road leads into the Upper Grove where you can reach "Canada's Gnarliest Tree"! This path has a steady incline throughout and passes by numerous giant redcedar trees.
9. The trail on the right side of the road takes you down to the Lower Grove's "Loop Trail". This features more gentle terrain with huge burly redcedars & large Douglas-fir trees.

Canada's Gnarliest Tree: Upper Avatar Grove



*Directions to Big Lonely Doug

(continued from Avatar Grove Direction #7 - on left)

8. Continue past the Avatar Grove on the Gordon River Main for approximately 4.5 km and take your FIRST RIGHT onto Edinburgh Main road. (Note: it is a smaller road with a dirt meridian at the turn off.)
9. Shortly after you will cross a bridge over a very tall canyon on the Gordon River. ***Note: From here on 4x4 vehicles with good clearance are highly recommended!**
10. Follow the rough road as it veers right and uphill. Continue on the main road for approximately 5 minutes.
11. A giant clearcut from 2012 will appear on your right hand side. In that clearcut you will see two big Douglas-firs left standing - the second one is Big Lonely Doug.

***NOTE: The hike into Big Lonely Doug is through a difficult clearcut and should ONLY be attempted by those with good balance. Please also limit time spent around the sensitive base of the tree.**
****GPS coordinates: Lat = 48.64622, Lon = -124.45051**

Harris Creek Spruce

This huge Sitka spruce grows just off the Harris Creek Main. A short trail has been cut to the tree, which is about 4 m (13 ft) in diameter. There is a sign and a pullout at the trailhead.

San Juan Sitka Spruce: Canada's Largest

To reach the San Juan Spruce, follow the Red Creek Fir driving directions #1-9. The giant tree growing by the river in the San Juan Bridge Recreation Site is Canada's largest Sitka spruce tree, based on the tree's volume of wood. It has a circumference of 11.6 m (38 ft) and a height of 62.5 m (205 ft).

