



## Trailblazer Mortifee Elkington proponent

By Cowichan News Leader Pictorial

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Ann Mortifee is riding the green wave into B.C.'s residential future at Elkington Forest.

The Order of Canada singer, and eco-housing visionary, speaks proudly Everwoods, her near-off grid, 15-home development on Cortes Island.

"We've seen ourselves as not part of the ecosystem, but masters of it, and that just has to change."

Soon, she'll move to her new place, the model home in the Elkington Forest project near Shawnigan Lake.

Everwoods sprouted in 2002. It later gave Elkington developer Doug Makaroff, and his investors, a green template for their 1,000-acre Living Forest Communities' project, she explained.

"Our hope was to create a model that will start spreading so more and more living-forest communities will arise, and people will ask if they're doing a living forest there," she told the News Leader Pictorial from Mexico.

Conservation communities such as Everwoods and Elkington also "create jobs in forestry, mushrooms, berries, and secondary manufacturing," she said.

"In Everwoods, they take wood from the land and make doors and windows. There's a lot more jobs created from a small patch of wood than what would otherwise be," said Mortifee, mortified by clear-cuts around her Cortes community.

"But at Elkington Forest families can live in perpetuity on the land."

That's why she started the Trust for Sustainable Forestry that owns the Elkington project's timber rights, and shares proceeds from its 97 lot sales.

"We're changing from industrial logging to ecosystem-based forestry.

"We have a 200-year forest-management plan, and the goal is to bring (Elkington) back to old growth. It's a way to protect the forest and create jobs."

Wildlife habitat too.

"What motivated me was the animals and trees. If Elkington Forest had been logged, the Roosevelt-elk migration route would be gone."

Mortifee sees living-forest communities "sitting at a place where organic food was years ago."

"We hope others come to us and say 'We have land in our regional district, and we want to do this.'"

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