

# Our mangroves are being destroyed and GOB is dragging its feet

Placencia  
Tues. June 17, 2009

Dear Editor,

The first trucks began at 8:10 this morning, and have been going at a very heavy, steady clip in a very short period of time. This is the heaviest morning truck traffic I have observed since the violation of the mangroves began back here early Sunday afternoon.

The land created in the last 24 hours is at least two to two and a half times the size it was this time yesterday morning. All this land, of course, just hours ago, used to be mangroves. The size of the created land is growing: the size of the mangroves is diminishing.

We have photos of more trucks directly dumping on the mangroves and bulldozer activity. No new action there, just more of the same, definitely more of it, there is a higher volume of trucks (and therefore dirt).

Virginia Johnson (I believe she goes by the name of Virginia Jones), wife of Dennis Johnson, the developer, this morning sat in a Chabil Mar golf cart, supervising this operation.

It is my understanding, via Brian Yearwood, village chairman, that DOE and its assembled team of government officials will be visiting Placencia sometime today. He said they would notify him when they reach Placencia. Brian has assured

me that he will contact me. I will do my utmost best to contact all of you so you can be in attendance, as well.

On Monday, June 16, PC Jeff Augustine, stationed at the Placencia police station, came here to inspect this site, at the request of Friends of Nature.

Mark, the supervisor, saw PC Augustine and Mark immediately got on his phone. He called Dennis Johnson, who asked to speak to PC Augustine.

Johnson told PC Augustine that he was free to walk back on the site, but I was not. But the most important thing he told PC Augustine was that he, Johnson, would be in Placencia on Tuesday, June 17, 2008, and would present all his permits and documents to prove that what he was doing was OK.

I just spoke to Sergeant Benguche a few minutes ago, and Dennis Johnson did not appear in the Placencia police station, not yesterday, as promised, not at anytime.

Johnson did not keep his word that he had made to the police.

Meanwhile, we are holding on for some government involvement and action down here. More mangroves are destroyed the longer we wait for that to happen.

**PLEASE! PLEASE! PLEASE! HELP US!**

Patricia E. Celenza



*Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and  
Minister of Natural Resources and the Environment,  
P.O. Box 1747, Belmopan, Belize, C.A.  
Tele: 501-822-3286, 501-822-2630; Fax: 501-822-2333  
- E-Mail - minister@mnr.gov.bz*

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**15 February 2008**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE ENVIRONMENT WOULD LIKE TO INFORM THE GENERAL PUBLIC THAT WITH IMMEDIATE EFFECT MANGROVES ARE BEING PLACED UNDER A MORATORIUM THUS, ALL MANGROVE ALTERATION PERMITS ARE HEREBY SUSPENDED.

THE MORATORIUM, WHICH WILL BE IN EFFECT FOR AN INITIAL PERIOD OF NINE MONTHS, IS TO ENABLE THE FOREST DEPARTMENT TO CONDUCT AN ASSESSMENT OF THE STATE OF MANGROVES IN THE COUNTRY AND TO REVIEW AND REVISE ITS SUBSIDIARY LAWS UNDER THE FOREST ACT, CHAPTER 213 OF THE LAWS OF BELIZE, PERTAINING TO THE FORESTS (PROTECTION OF MANGROVES) REGULATIONS OF 1989.

End.