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Southwest Alberta groups release new recommendations for sustainable forest management

Today sees the release of a new report, *Sustainable Forests, Sustainable Communities: The Future of Alberta's Southwestern Forests*. Citizens and associations from communities throughout southwestern Alberta have joined together to document serious concerns with current industrial-scale logging practices, and present an alternative vision for the management of Alberta's southwestern forests.

The new report contains a series of recommendations for a new model of forest management in Alberta, based on ecosystems, guided by independent scientific expertise and augmented by local community participation and benefit.

"We are not opposed to all logging," say the groups in the report. "Instead we support the development of a forest management model that maintains healthy forest ecosystems as its primary function, and offers sustainable benefits to communities from the wise use of these forests."

Recommendations from the report include:

- "The first priority of forest management in southwestern Alberta forests will be the conservation of the ecological values of the forest, including provision of clean, abundant water, diverse forest ecosystems, wildlife habitat and connectivity, and natural carbon capture and storage.
- "The second priority will be appropriate human use of the same forested landscape, including appropriate recreation and tourism, and sustainable forestry.
- "Public consultation processes will be accessible, accountable and transparent."

Signatories to the new report include:

*Alberta Wilderness Association
Beaver Mines store
Bert Riggall Environmental Foundation
Bow Valley Naturalists
Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition
Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition
Crowsnest Conservation Society*

*Full Circle Adventures
Ghost Watershed Alliance Society
Livingstone Landowners Group
South Porcupine Hills Stewardship Association
Southern Alberta Group for the Environment
Stop the Castle Logging Group
Trail of the Great Bear
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative*

The full report, *Sustainable Forests, Sustainable Communities: The Future of Alberta's Southwestern Forests* can be seen online at www.AlbertaWilderness.ca

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