



ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

"Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action"

The Hon. Ed Stelmach
Premier of Alberta
Room 307, Legislature Building
10800 – 97th Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Honourable Mel Knight
Minister of Sustainable Resource Development
#404 Legislature Building
10800 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

September 10, 2010

Dear Premier Stelmach and Minister Knight

Re: Imminent Destruction of Endangered Species Habitat to Grow Potatoes

AWA is asking for an emergency response from the Alberta government to prevent the imminent destruction of more than 100 quarters of public land, known to be habitat for a number of endangered species.

AWA is very disturbed to learn that the sale of a huge area of public land – more than 100 quarters – is going through without public knowledge or opportunity for comment. The land is known to have several species listed under the federal Species at Risk Act, including burrowing owl, ferruginous hawk, Sprague's pipit, chestnut-collared longspur, McCown's longspur, short-eared owl, and long-billed curlew.

AWA is led to believe that the decision to sell this land is before Cabinet. It is our understanding that the majority of the 100 quarters of native prairie is to be ploughed up for potato farming, to be used in the manufacture of snack food "potato chips".

The public has made it very clear on numerous occasions that they do not want their public land sold. Public Lands are managed by the Alberta government on behalf of all Albertans.

Selling and trading Public Lands with no opportunity for public comment is a failure of public duty.

We are asking the Alberta government for an emergency response from the minister to stop this sale going through, and to allow for full public discussion before any irreversible decisions are made.

Yours truly,

ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

Christyann Olson,
Executive Director

cc: David Swann, MLA, Leader Alberta Liberal Party
cc: Brian Mason, MLA, Leader New Democrat Party
cc: Paul Hinman, MLA, Wild Rose Alliance