



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

September 15, 2010

Dear Premier Stelmach

Re: Imminent Destruction of Endangered Species Habitat to Grow Potatoes

Further to AWA's letter of Friday the 10th of September 2010, AWA is writing today to request you bring your ministry in line with an ethically and morally sound approach to prairie conservation on Public Lands. Specifically, the AWA is calling on you to:

1. halt the sale of this valuable prairie grassland in Townships 12 and 13, Range 11, West of the 4th Meridian
2. put in place a public process for disposition of any Public Land in Alberta
3. strengthen provisions in the Public Lands Act for prairie conservation; and
4. legislatively protect environmentally significant native grasslands on Public Lands.

Michael Short of the radio program "Let's Go Outdoors" was apparently told by Minister Knight on Monday that funds from the land sale would be given to the Nature Conservancy of Canada (Alberta) for use in purchasing perhaps as much as ten times the amount of native grassland that will be lost to potato farming in this deal.

AWA has learned that the Nature Conservancy of Canada is unaware of any such arrangement and it is AWA's understanding that the Nature Conservancy of Canada could not support such conversion of native grasslands to grow potatoes for snack food, especially when habitat for so many species at risk is involved.

These 100 quarters of public land, known to be habitat for a number of 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 understands that the decision to sell this land is before Cabinet.

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.

Sincerely yours,

ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION



Christyann Olson
Executive Director

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