



## \$1,000,000,000 + Meridian Dam Proposal Returns

There are three major grassland areas remaining in Canada. One of them could end up under water. Alberta's Minister of the Environment, Lorne Taylor, appears able and willing to overlook issues in health care, education and poverty to spend one billion dollars on the Meridian Dam irrigation project, in order to benefit approximately fifty farms. Amongst these farms, support of the project is not even unanimous.

"What you have here is a clash of fundamental values," says AWA president, Cliff Wallis. "The government values business and agriculture over the environment. Alberta lets business take care of business everywhere except when it comes to agriculture. There is nothing else the government subsidizes as heavily."

A \$100,000 feasibility study is underway, 75% of which is to be paid by Alberta, the rest by Saskatchewan, to be completed by the end of the year. The consultants were not chosen through public tender, ostensibly to save time. There will be up to six stakeholder meetings in which the public can participate. The dam is being promoted primarily by a group called the Meridian Water Resources Association based in Medicine Hat, with support from individuals and local governments in both provinces.

Mark Cooper works with communication in Lorne Taylor's Edmonton office. When asked what comes after the feasibility study he stressed, "This is just a pre-feasibility study, we are looking at the conceptual stage with cost benefit analysis, environmental issues and legislative requirements."

When asked how many farms they anticipate the dam benefiting he responded "That is not yet determined; it would be part of the cost analysis." He went on to conclude, "There has been talk of this dam for years

and it's time to make a decision one way or the other by laying everything on the table and moving ahead."

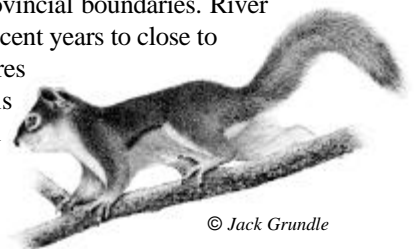
Indeed, it was first proposed as part of a Prairie Provinces water management plan in 1972 and would have cost around \$111 million. That rose to \$300 million by 1985 when the proposal resurfaced. Then there was a proposal for a June 1997 pre-feasibility study by the Meridian Dam Association out of Medicine Hat that was apparently never followed up on. Within two months of Lorne Taylor being appointed to the environment he okayed another study. The two proposals are strikingly similar. But today the dam is expected to cost about a billion dollars.

***"If you have to flood a portion of an ecological reserve to get the water, flood it, I say."***

***- Lorne Taylor (The Edmonton Journal, 1996)***

Walter Dybvig, vice-president of the provincial water management agency, Sask Water, has stated that the Saskatchewan government does not consider it to be a practical project. "It is very expensive, has the potential to create significant environmental impacts and would have a very negative effect on the availability of water in Lake Diefenbaker", the reservoir created by the Gardner dam in 1967 for irrigation. They are waiting for the results of the feasibility study.

CFB Suffield is also concerned about the Dam and its associated reservoir because of its live ammunition training. Although the public is currently allowed to travel the South Saskatchewan River, they are not allowed to stop on military land. The creation of a lake might make it harder to ensure the public's safety. CFB Suffield is under the jurisdiction of the federal government. The federal government can intervene in the Meridian Dam decision because it will flood federal land and interfere with a navigable waterway that crosses provincial boundaries. River flows have been reduced in recent years to close to the minimum 42.5 cubic metres per second that Alberta is required to send downstream to Saskatchewan under a 1959 federal agreement (Saskatoon Star Phoenix, May 28, 2001).



© Jack Grundle

INSIDE	
Global Forest Watch Canada .....	5
Alberta Wilderness Watch .....	7
Alberta Forest Conservation Strategy .....	7
Spray Lake Sawmills FMA .....	8
Sheep River .....	8
Chinchaga .....	8
Protecting our Wilderness .....	9
The Good Wood Project .....	9
Forest Stewardship Council .....	9
Little Smoky .....	10
Solomon Valley Action Alert .....	10
Bighorn Country .....	10
Game Farming .....	10
Lac La Biche .....	11
Waterton .....	11
Yellowstone to Yukon .....	12
Association News .....	13
Upcoming Events .....	15



© C. Wallis

*South Saskatchewan Rapid Narrows*

## What We Stand To Lose

The proposed site of the Meridian Dam is on the South Saskatchewan River valley near the Alberta-Saskatchewan border (see map). The dam will create a reservoir 150 kms long and a kilometer wide backing up water almost to Medicine Hat. The reservoir will submerge two long coulees within the Prairie Coulees Natural Area and part of the proposed Suffield National Wildlife Area.

Biologist Gary Trottier says, "There's going to be major, major impacts on the natural resources of that river valley over and above the loss of the scenic situation." Stephan Legault adds, "The South Saskatchewan is the best example of a canyon ecosystem we have. Currently, 95% of the prairie ecosystem in Canada is gone, this will destroy another large part."

"The South Saskatchewan River valley has a very narrow floodplain, there are not extensive cottonwood forests as there are along some other rivers in Alberta, but those thin bands of cottonwoods are very rich in terms of supporting biological communities," says Dr. Stewart Rood, a river researcher at the University of Lethbridge who has studied the effects of dams on rivers.

"What may be most distinctive about that river valley," adds Rood, "is not the floodplain woodlands but instead a number of springfed woodlands and wetlands along the south banks. There, water from distant sand hills weeps out and supports some very rich patches of wetland and riparian areas. These are relatively distinctive, they're very uncommon and they're quite rich in terms of biodiversity. So we have a type of ecological zone in the South Saskatchewan canyon that is quite unusual. Relative to their value, it's hard to know how to evaluate plants, wildlife, aesthetics and recreation, and all these are typically undervalued in a traditional benefit-cost analysis."

The South Saskatchewan canyon currently provides a nest-

ing area for rare birds of prey including Prairie Falcons, Hawks and Golden Eagles. Additionally it is a feeding area for American White Pelicans and is key Mule Deer and Antelope habitat. Of huge importance is the fact it has the largest and highest density of over wintering areas for large snakes in Alberta and possibly Canada. It is also home to several endangered animal species such as burrowing owls, the Great Plains toad and swift foxes.

The river has great potential for eco-tourism. "In my own view," says Stewart Rood, "the South Saskatchewan valley has many similarities to the Upper Missouri River valley that has become an international focus for extended canoe tripping. People come from across the continent to paddle the Upper Missouri in Montana. In my view, the landscape of the South Saskatchewan is as impressive and the river trip is as desirable."

## Benefits versus Costs

The Meridian Dam is expected to irrigate up to 160,000 hectares, create a lake-based recreation industry in the area and provide up to 325 megawatts of power. In comparison, the Revelstoke Dam provides 2000 megawatts of power. However, in order to increase profits, Revelstoke buys power from Alberta thermal electric plants at night, when demand is low and the price is cheaper, and sells it again at a higher cost. They can save the water stored in the reservoirs for when they really need it or can sell it for a higher price.

Irrigation projects can be politically expedient to promote. They not only provide water to farms but also generate a large amount of short-term employment through engineering and construction. This dam will benefit the constituents of Lorne Taylor's dusty Cypress/Medicine Hat riding. Some locals believe it will help save the rural communities in the area. However, the actual value of dams is highly controversial, partly because the benefits and costs are difficult to measure and are not measured accurately.

ly. Cliff Wallis believes "Irrigation encourages the government subsidy of unsustainable programs in agriculture."

Stewart Rood says it's difficult to know the actual cost of agriculture subsidies because so many costs are never factored in and there are many layers of subsidies. At the least, the Provincial Government pays for the cost of the dams, and most of the cost of the canals. "The argument for this is that the beneficiaries of irrigation are really not solely the farmers and irrigation groups argue that the benefits are not even principally the farmers. Irrigation enables higher intensity agriculture than dryland farming, it employs more people, and there are more spin-offs in terms of value-added food processing. Irrigation does, clearly, stimulate the economy at various levels."

However, there is a downside to irrigation that is not factored in to benefit-cost analyses. Dr. C. Fred Bentley is the former Dean of Agriculture from the University of Alberta and has considerable overseas experience with irrigation projects. "The worldwide results of irrigation were disappointing," he says. "On a world basis, of all land ever irrigated

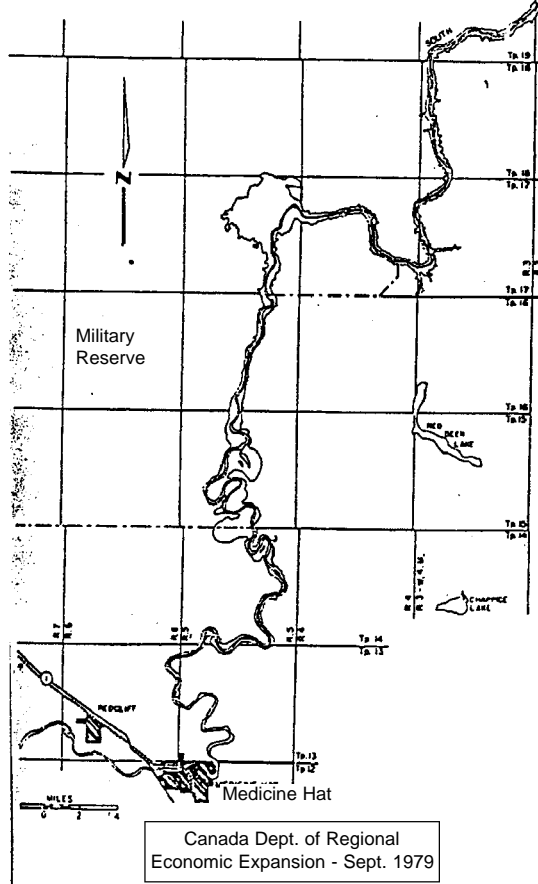
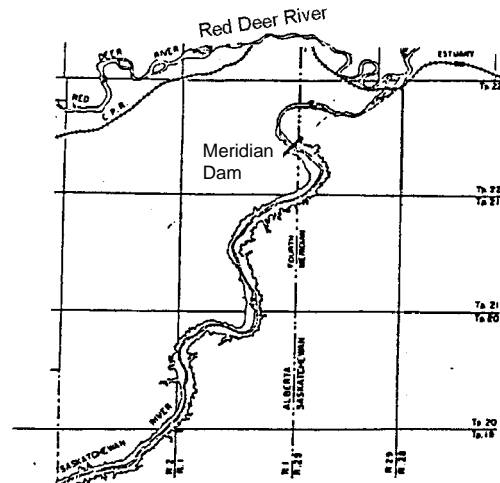
about 25% has been significantly impaired, reducing agricultural yields by 50% or more. In many cases it is impractical to reclaim this land."

Bentley has found there are two potential problems associated with irrigation. "The first is when the application of water exceeds what plants take up. The water table rises over time, unless adequate drainage has been factored in, and crops cannot produce. The second problem is an increase in salinity which occurs when salt content grows due to constant evaporation and, in some cases, the product can be reduced by up to 100%."

Bentley told the Edmonton Journal (Feb. 13, 2001) the "plan to irrigate a huge area in east central Alberta is doomed because land is unsuitable for irrigation farming. Land consists of solonchic soil, which is a dense soil layer below the surface that resists rooting by cereal and forage crops."

Dr. Shirley Bray, who researched the effects of salinity on plant growth at the University of Calgary says, "Salinity problems are common in arid and semi-arid regions. They are usually human generated and can ultimately render the soil unsuitable for agriculture. Irrigation may make some of the very dry region of southeastern Alberta bloom, but for how long? For example, water flowing into the Aral Sea Basin in Central Asia has been

used for irrigation for more than 30 years. In that time, the sea has dried up significantly, leaving millions of people with a desert in place of a sea, and the irrigated soil is becoming progressively saltier and infertile."



Canada Dept. of Regional Economic Expansion - Sept. 1979

Some question whether farmers need to change their way of thinking regarding what types of crops they plant. "Alfalfa, pasture crops, potatoes and sugar beets use the most water. Potatoes and sugar beets are shallow rooted and therefore need constant watering, especially on coarser soils," writes Debby Gregorash, (Encompass Magazine, May/June 2001).

And how expensive will the irrigation water be from a very expensive dam? Comparisons with the Oldman Dam are inevitable. Norm Conrad, a lawyer who studied the Oldman Dam, roughly calculated that if the Oldman Dam cost \$500 million and provides water for less than 40,500 hectares, this is at a capital cost of about \$12,500 per hectare. Farmers in the Western Irrigation District currently pay between \$40 and \$45 per hectare per year.

However, Stewart Rood emphasizes that each dam is different. "My guess is that the cost relative to water, and particularly delivery of water, will be much more for the Meridian than for the Oldman. The big difference is that the Oldman allows for the water to be stored in the foothills and then subsequently flows by gravity down slope to the sites of irrigation."

**"The South Saskatchewan is the best example of a canyon ecosystem we have. Currently, 95% of the prairie ecosystem in Canada is gone, this will destroy another large part." - Stephen Legault**

"In contrast, the Meridian will basically fill up a fairly deep valley and any irrigation in Alberta would be above that valley. Consequently, the Meridian water would have to be pumped. This is an expensive process and it's a continuing, perpetual

expense. Every single time a farmer wants to irrigate costly energy will be consumed to raise water. One can imagine that there will be some energy subsidies to facilitate this water pumping and there's going to be subsidies upon subsidies and layers upon layers of subsidies. It will be very difficult for either the farmer, or society more broadly, to determine at what point this is economical or non-economical."

The true cost of irrigation or a dam is very difficult to calculate, because many costs are generally not included, such as in-house costs. "What we really need," says Rood, "is something that might be equivalent to a forensic audit; when everything is said and done, going back to find out how much the Oldman Dam Project actually cost. The province considered that the construction of the Oldman Dam was approximately on-time and on-budget. And on-budget meant about 350 million, in dollars, at the time that the project was committed. But if one considers the actual inflated costs and all the peripheral expenses, including many that are in-house with provincial agencies, many unexpected legal costs, unanticipated mitigation and monitoring costs, environmental reviews, consultations and many other activities, my guess is that the real cost of the Oldman Dam was probably in the order of 600 million to a billion dollars.

***"It's ironic to consider the current debate about Canadian water export. Meanwhile, here in Alberta, we can't sell water, but we can sure waste it."***  
***- Dianne Fitzgerald***

"Relative to the Meridian Dam, all of those costs should be included. There's going to need to be a joint provincial-federal environmental assessment that should be comprehensive. That will cost money. There will be lots of people in provincial agencies in both Alberta and Saskatchewan that spend time on this; there will be lots of federal agencies spending time on the project. All of that time must be factored in to the cost of the overall project if you want a true analysis of what this thing costs.

"So if the Oldman Project comes in between 600 million and a billion, then the Meridian is going to come in well over a billion since many canals and additional irrigation infrastructure must also be constructed. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to actually sort through and find out how much the project fully costs. The original scoping review is budgeted at \$100,000. This is clearly insufficient to come up with a reasonable preliminary assessment."

One cost to be factored in is the cost of dealing with oil and gas facilities in the canyon that will be flooded. One company that was contacted, Alberta Energy Company, refused to comment on the Meridian Dam.

According to Stephen Legault, "The Alberta government should know from their own experiences with the Oldman River Dam that the days of dam building are over. If we are going to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on a feasibility study, it should be on how we can get rid of dams, such as the Oldman River Dam, which flooded the prairie and foothill homes of many plants and animals. The river ecosystem downstream is changed, it has become a static ecosystem, the cottonwoods are dying and native fish habitat has been destroyed."

Cliff Wallis agrees. "There has not been a positive effect. It

has blocked bull trout migration and there is no irrigation to the locals. The water is committed downstream to deal with downstream irrigation problems. There has been a loss of habitat and the replacement of a good fishery with a bad one."

According to Stewart Rood, "one of the biggest environmental costs was the conversion of the three river valleys into a reservoir. Those lands were flooded, not to produce a lake that is biologically productive and recreationally attractive, but to produce a reservoir with an extensive drawdown. It is biologically relatively barren and recreationally less desirable." However, the benefit of the Oldman Dam was that it mitigated some of the effects of the LNID weir that was built in the early 1920's.

The weir diverted much of the river water leaving the river valley downstream with a very meager flow of water. In combination with the high temperature of summer, "it had a severe negative impact on the aquatic ecosystem - the fisheries - and it also led to a chronic stress on the floodplain vegetation," says Rood. "The cottonwoods downstream from the LNID weir were declining in recent decades." The Oldman Dam improved conditions downstream from the weir by allowing for storage of water during the spring peak flow period and enabling more regular release through the summer, benefiting downstream communities of Fort Macleod and Lethbridge. This situation is not comparable to the South Saskatchewan River or the Meridian Dam.

Karen Bray, a fish biologist in Revelstoke, who studies the impact of dams on fisheries, says "the creation of a reservoir leads to an initial boom in productivity as nutrients are leached out of the soil, but this is followed by a crash when that ends. Nutrients coming in from the river system settle out in the reservoir and the final result is an oligotrophication. Dams can be migration blocks and inundate riverine and tributary habitat used for spawning and rearing. The whole ecology changes from a riverine to lacustrine system", with a subsequent change in species.

"Most reservoirs fluctuate dramatically," she continues, "and this can result in loss of riparian areas or the littoral zone depending on whether you are upstream or downstream of the dam." This can also create problems for recreationists. For example, in the Arrow Lakes, B.C., which are created by dams downstream from the Revelstoke Dam, Jillian Tamblin has noted that landowners with waterfront property must have movable docks to cope with the annual changes in water levels.

## **What We Can Do**

The pre-feasibility study is due to be completed by the end of this year, and once it's done it will be difficult, if not impossible, to stop the momentum if the decision made is to go forward. Now is the time for the federal government to create the Suffield National Wildlife Area. Now is the time for making known to our government, with no degree of uncertainty, that a dam of this magnitude is simply not acceptable. There can be no confusion. The obliteration of precious natural areas is too high a price to pay for some sugar beets and conservative votes. 🇩🇪

*(Join the many Albertans who are already taking action to stop the Meridian Dam. Write a letter to Lorne Taylor, Ralph Klein, David Anderson and Jean Chretien telling them of your concerns. See our website, AlbertaWilderness.ca, for an action alert.)*

# GLOBAL FOREST WATCH CANADA

## Mapping Canada's Forests

By Peter Lee

A recent study by Global Forest Watch Canada and World Resources Institute (1) reported that Canada has one of the world's major repositories of northern forest. The maps below show the global decline of forests and Canada's critical remaining boreal forest. (2)

Canada is home to over a third of the world's boreal forest and a tenth of total global forest cover. Largely unsuited to agriculture, these forests have escaped widespread conversion to farmland and ranches—key threats in tropical regions. This provides a world-class conservation opportunity! However, a major challenge is to ensure the maintenance of this global ecological treasure in the face of massive, imminent industrial pressures.

Global Forest Watch Canada and World Resources Institute have undertaken a major project to map, using satellite imagery, the forest extent, forest disturbances and remaining intact forests throughout the commercial zone of Canada. This project is being undertaken to contribute to the maintenance of Canada's forests and is part of a larger global effort by Global Forest Watch International.

### The Opportunities:

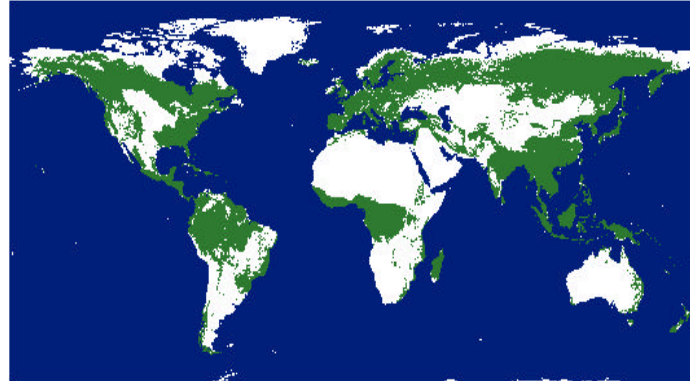
Over the last few years, revolutionary advances in computer and communications technologies have cut the costs of environmental monitoring. NGOs in many parts of the world are now taking advantage of these technologies to marry existing information held by government agencies and research organizations with satellite imagery and field data collected through their grass-roots networks, to track the status of, and changes in, forest resources. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) make it possible to store and analyze vast amounts of data using low-cost desktop programs. The Internet offers a means for sharing and disseminating this information across great distances, instantaneously, and to millions of users.

As well as technological opportunities, several major U.S. and European companies that purchase wood from Canada's boreal forest have recently committed to cease buying wood from what they have variously termed 'endangered forests' and 'high conservation value forests' and to ensure that their 'good wood' purchases come from sustainably-managed forests. From the ongoing debate on sustainable forestry is emerging a growing recognition of the need to identify where the remaining intact forests are in Canada's vast forest regions.

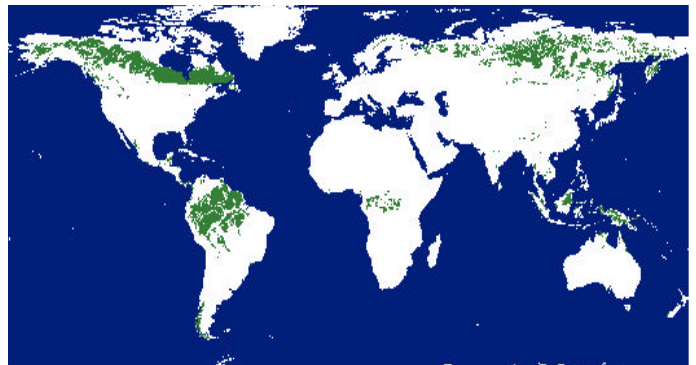
Canada is the world's leading exporter of timber products and four-fifths of all Canadian forest products are exported to the United States. The companies who have made the recent commitments - including Home Depot, Lowe's, and IKEA - account for around 25 percent of total U.S. wood retail volume and other companies may follow this lead.

Meanwhile the U.S. Treasury, the World Bank, and others are devising new conditions to govern support for forest projects that involve similar commitments. These commitments point to a new opportunity to advance sustainable forestry and the conservation of remaining intact forests, which will help to preserve

biological diversity and provide the nucleus for future ecosystem restoration. Global Forest Watch Canada, World Resources Institute and Global Forest Watch International have capitalized on these opportunities to initiate a project: Mapping Canada's Intact Forests.



Frontier Forests 8,000 years ago



Frontier forests today

### The Problems:

Canada's boreal forest is rapidly being opened up for its timber, energy, and mineral resources. Some of the key problems identified in Global Forest Watch Canada's Crossroads report that will be addressed by mapping Canada's intact forests are:

- **Canada's forests are managed predominantly for timber. However, the Canadian public values forests primarily for nontimber uses.**

Some 94 percent of Canada's forests are held in the public trust by federal and provincial governments. Polling data indicate Canadians most value forests for nontimber uses: for species habitat; for ecosystem services such as watershed protection and carbon storage; and for intrinsic wilderness value. Mapping Canada's intact forests will identify for Canadians important areas for wild life, wilderness and other nontimber uses.

- **Canada's most species-rich and productive forests have been extensively modified by development activities.**

Roads and other access routes have fragmented over half of the forests in 7 of Canada's 10 major forest regions. The intact forest mapping project will map where the most modified areas and where the intact forests are located.

- **Development increasingly extends into Canada's northern most forests.**

Almost 50% of Canada's boreal forest region is under logging tenure. Much of the remaining 50% is intact forests and the more northerly forest-tundra region is mostly intact, but threatened with mining, energy and other developments. The intact forest mapping project will help identify the best remaining opportunities to focus future conservation efforts.

From the results of Global Forest Watch Canada's intact mapping project, it is exciting to visualize future mapping and analysis products that can help to improve forest management decisions throughout Canada. One example is identifying intact forests in relation to companies' operating areas, forest ecological zones, political jurisdictions and First Nations, and in relation to existing gaps in representation for protected areas, buffers and connecting corridors. Another example is documenting the remaining intact forests in the face of increasing development that extends into Canada's northernmost forests.

Lacking comprehensive data on forest condition, development and its impacts, Canadian government resource agencies and the private sector are often unable to make informed decisions about how they manage their forest resources. NGOs and advocacy groups, which might otherwise play an oversight role assuring that these areas are being managed in the public interest, have been similarly hampered. Detailed and up-to-date maps and satellite images of the location of remaining intact boreal forest need to be a key input to bioregional planning approaches and to advocacy efforts in Canada which balance economic and conservation needs.

## Where We Are Now:

As of June 2000, we have purchased an initial 50 Landsat TM/ETM+ images for the boreal plains and montane cordillera ecozones. Most of these images are now available for downloading or CD purchase. We are using two image dates for each area, 7-10 years apart, for the fine-scale mapping. The use of two dates allows better analysis of forest change. The output for the Boreal Plains Ecozone is targeted for formal review by September/October 2001 and will consist of a forest cover map, a forest disturbance map and an intact forest map.

Review of methods and products will be an on-going component of the mapping project. A wide-range of experts reviewed the initial methodology and these comments have been incorporated into this revision. The final maps for each ecozone will be reviewed by regional experts, as well as validated using ancillary data.

The Canada forest mapping project is the first step in a com-

prehensive, long-term effort to assess and monitor forest condition. (3) Funding permitting, future work will build on our present mapping efforts and will focus on filling in gaps in the satellite imagery within the commercial forest zone, expanding our mapping efforts north of the commercial forest zone, and on fine-scale identification of other forests with high conservation value such as forest areas for biodiversity protection and forest areas containing threatened ecosystems, communities or species. Additionally, we are committed to regular future monitoring of forest condition at appropriate intervals. ■

### Global Forest Watch Canada:

GFWC's mandate is to provide objective, balanced information on Canada's forests to as wide an audience as possible. One of our goals is to complete an intact forest mapping project for Canada's commercial forest zone by the summer of 2002. Our Strategic Plan, detailing our mission, purposes, goals and describing our major projects is available at [www.globalforestwatch.org](http://www.globalforestwatch.org).

For further information, please contact:

Peter Lee  
National Coordinator  
Global Forest Watch Canada  
10337 146 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5N 3A3  
tel: (780) 451-9260  
fax: (780) 454-5521  
e-mail: [borealforest@powersurfr.com](mailto:borealforest@powersurfr.com)

#### Footnotes:

- (1) World Resources Institute. 2000. *Canada's Forests at a Crossroads: An Assessment in the Year 2000. A Global Forest Watch Canada report.*
- (2) Dirk Bryant, Daniel Nielsen and Laura Tanglely, *The Last Frontier Forests: Ecosystems and Economies on the Edge*, (World Resources Institute, Washington DC, 1997).
- (3) *There are many local or regional specific mapping efforts such as those of the Sierra Club of British Columbia.*



## THE ALBERTA FOREST CONSERVATION STRATEGY REVISITED

By W.A. (Bill) Fuller



Diversity, signed by the Prime Minister of Canada in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

Members of the Steering Committee (SC) were given to understand that the Provincial Government was seriously considering a change in the way in which forestry is done in Alberta. A new Forestry Act was a possibility.

The first few meetings that I attended were all about reaching consensus. The government clearly wanted consensus in the final report. When we finally turned our attention to forest conservation, the first step was to come up with a vision of Alberta's forests in the future. When some of us included "wilderness" in our vision we were voted down. When we tried other wording, such as "natural condition," or "primeval," or "pristine," or "healthy forest ecosystems" we met the same opposition. When it was suggested that climate and soils might have something to do with the future of the forests it was made clear that Alberta would have forests, period. The thought that forests might provide us and our descendants with ecosystem services, natural beauty, spiritual renewal, the opportunity to experience wilderness, as well as material goods, was a non-starter. So much for consensus!

Prior to my joining the SC, five "Strategic Directions" had been identified. For each of the five a Working Group was assembled, and one or more members of the SC were attached to each of them. Eventually, each Working Group prepared a report, which was presented at one of the meetings of the SC.

Strategic Direction number one was to introduce Ecosystem (Ecological) Management to replace the current Sustained Yield Timber Management. The Report of the Working Group strongly supported Ecosystem Management as a move toward sustainable forestry.

The second objective was meant to achieve a Sustainable Forest Economy. The report of the Working Group recognized both market and non-market values of the forest, and the necessity for sustainable forests. But in the final report of the SC none of those points were even discussed. Alberta is unique in that it can have a sustainable forest economy without a sustainable forest!

The third objective was to establish, or complete, a network of Representative Protected Areas. I was assigned to represent the SC on that Working Group. Because Alberta was already committed to establishing protected areas when it signed on to the National Forest Strategy and the Convention on Biological Diversity there should have been no problem with consensus.

There were spirited discussions at every meeting, but their final report did recognize a need for protected areas. I, and others on the SC, argued for at least some large reserves. We also proposed a program of study within some of the reserves to keep track of changes in flora and fauna over time. Our words fell on deaf ears on all counts.

The fourth objective was to introduce a Range of Management Intensities extending from full protection to total sacrifice of forest cover for construction of facilities. I, and others, urged adoption of Odum's four categories, one of which is that some land be kept in its natural condition. The flag went up and Odum was rejected.

The final objective was to bring Forest Practices into line with the requirements of Ecosystem Management. Both logging methods and methods of forest regeneration were to be taken into account. Given that Ecosystem Management was not adopted, there was obviously no need to alter forest practices.

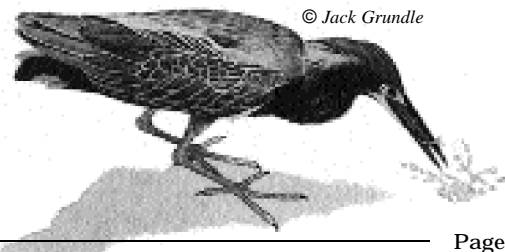
As time went on, it became clear that the government had an agenda that it was not about to change. Several members of the SC felt that we were embarking on a large-scale experiment based on a number of essentially untested hypotheses. That being the case we felt a need for a strong wording of the Precautionary Principle. The wording that made its way into the report was totally without value.

As weak as it was, the final report was apparently too controversial to be released to the public. Nor would the government release the reports of the Working Groups. In their place, we got a "Forest Legacy."

The Forest Legacy is a shameful transformation and denial of a process that went on in good faith for more than three years and cost in the vicinity of \$400,000. What a price to pay for a poorly written, messy little document, printed on cheap paper reminiscent of the paper used in the former USSR, and "full of sound and fury signifying nothing"!

A legacy is something of value handed down by a predecessor. What we will hand down will be nothing more than a bunch of trees planted in neat straight lines. They will probably all be of one species over huge areas. Undergrowth, from mosses to shrubs, will be strictly controlled. Such simplified tree farms will not support a diversified flora or fauna. They may retain some economic value, but what about the non-market values that we find in natural forests? It seems unlikely that those who inherit the legacy will ever see a real forest large enough to get lost in.

*(Bill Fuller began his professional career as a federal civil servant "north of 60." After 12 years in the north he spent 25 years in the zoology department of the University of Alberta. He now lives a few miles north of Athabasca.)*



© Jack Grundle

## Kananaskis: Spray Lake Sawmills FMA

Dedicated citizens of Alberta are joining with the AWA to actively oppose a FMA being negotiated between Spray Lake Sawmills (1980) Ltd. of Cochrane and the Alberta Government. The AWA is opposed to FMAs in principle for a number of reasons. First, FMAs transfer the long-term management and monitoring of a forest from the government to the forest company. The government is accountable to the citizens of Alberta, but the forest company has a vested interest in a sustained timber supply and a bias against further establishing protected areas that threaten timber supplies.

FMAs are also established without the involvement of the public. With the proposed FMA, this lack of public participation has occurred in spite of the fact that the public has repeatedly expressed their opposition to further industrial development in the Kananaskis. Concern over this FMA is far-reaching, and has been expressed by citizens in the gateway communities of Kananaskis including Black Diamond, Cochrane, and Bragg Creek.

The FMA being proposed by Spray Lake Sawmills will cover the Kananaskis in its entirety and will also extend north to the Red Deer River, encompassing the Burnt Timber and Ghost/Waiparous forests. The proposed FMA would include the headwaters of the Sheep and Highwood, and portions of the Elbow and Ghost, watersheds. The Agreement will result in this public land being essentially transferred to private ownership for the duration of the lease, in this case 20 years. With only 3-5% of the land within an FMA available to be set aside from logging, if the citizens of this province want further areas protected in

Kananaskis Country, they will have to buy back from the forest company lands they used to own.

Currently, the AWA continues to collect petition signatures and to date over 2,000 signatures have been sent to the Legislature. In Calgary, visit Campers' Village or Mountain Equipment Co-op to sign the petition, or write a letter (and please send a copy to the AWA) to the Premier and the Ministers of Environment, Economic Development, and Sustainable Resource Development to voice your opposition to this FMA.

- Joleen Timko

## Kananaskis: Sheep River

The AWA is pursuing the establishment of a legislated Sheep River protected area. The Sheep River region was ignored when the Province's Special Places 2000 process established the Elbow-Sheep Wildland Park in 1996. The Park is considered by many to be too small to protect the ecological integrity of the area.

The Sheep River is an ecologically diverse region containing deer, elk, moose, big horn sheep, both black and grizzly bears, and a notably dense population of cougars. This region also has a diversity of landscape values including cliffs and steep valley walls, and grassy slopes and wide valley floors. It is also a critical watershed vital to the protection of Calgary's water supply.

If protected, this region would serve as a buffer zone to the Wildland Park, would aid in protecting the largest remaining example of the Foothills region in the Rocky Mountains, and would contribute to the achieving a protected corridor in accordance with the Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) Conservation Initiative.

To encourage Albertans to express their support of a Sheep River protected area, the AWA has teamed up with Wildcanada.net. At the beginning of July, an action center will be accessible through the AWA's website that will provide background information on the Sheep region and will allow supporters to fax letters to the relevant parties involved. Visit the AWA website to show your support for the Sheep River region!

- Joleen Timko

## Chinchaga

Through the Freedom of Information Legislation the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)- Edmonton Chapter requested release of the letter of agreement with Grande Alberta Paper regarding their proposed pulp and paper mill in Grande Prairie. The request was turned down by the Government, which cited two statutory exemptions in FOIP giving it discretionary power to withhold documents. However, the Government gave no reason or explanation why these exemptions apply in this case. CPAWS is now requesting an explanation. The wood to supply this new mill, should it be approved, will come primarily from the Chinchaga area.

A full-scale regional timber supply analysis is being conducted in the Chinchaga area, involving AENV, RDD, Daishowa-Marubeni Int., Grande Alberta Paper, Manning Diversified Forest Products LTD, and Canfor. This should enable them to clearly show there is no room for new industry in our already over-allocated forest. That is, of course, if government and industry are





to live up to their commitments to a shift to ecological management of our forests and the establishment of landscape level ecological benchmark protected areas. So far government has shown no inclination to meet these commitments. Five years after the Alberta Forest Conservation Strategy was written there have been no significant change in forestry practices, and no large protected areas containing representative commercial forest have been established.

- *Helene Walsh*

## What can I do to help protect our wilderness?

Right now the AWA is exploring opportunities in the Foothills to educate consumers on how their purchasing influences the protection of our environment.

One of the easiest ways to visibly make a difference is through our wood product purchasing. Every day we can make choices to reduce our wood product consumption and increase our recycling of paper and bits of wood. But, we can do much more than that. Initiatives are starting in the province to help give you the facts about the retailers and logging companies from which to buy products ranging from lumber to furniture to paper. RAGE and the Sierra Club has already started a wood purchasing guide for Edmonton.

A Forest Stewardship Council Certification interest group, including the AWA, is gathering speed. We are also working with several provincial and international organizations to put on a Market Action workshop for local groups. The AWA is developing a web site to help you learn about these initiatives, what companies are up to and what you can do.

### *As consumers and stockholders in companies we have POWER!*

Due to consumer demand companies and retailers around the world are going Old Growth Free and are developing more sustainable wood purchasing policies. In Edmonton, a consumer's wood purchasing handbook will be released by the fall. With the right information you can develop sustainable wood product and usage purchasing habits and influence retailers to buy their supplies from conscientious companies. Help protect your own back yard!

- *Jillian Tamblyn*

## The Good Wood Project

Want to make sure the wood you purchase is not contributing to the destruction of the world's forests?

Rainforest Action Group of Edmonton and Sierra Club-Prairie Chapter have initiated a project to produce a Consumer's Guide to Good Wood in Edmonton. By "good wood" we mean wood that does not come from endangered forests and wood that is Forest Stewardship Council certified. The guide will be both on the Sierra Club website and distributed as a hard copy. Information used to create the guide will be posted on the website as it becomes available. You can check it out now at <http://www.sierraclub.ca/prairie>

Currently the only wood identified by this project as good wood is recycled wood. Contact information for companies who sell recycled wood is posted on the website.

However, two major retailers (IKEA and Home Depot) have

made international commitments with respect to endangered forests and the purchase of Forest Stewardship Council certified wood. One of the first steps of the Good Wood Project is to clarify their position and how their commitments affect what they supply to the Edmonton consumer. It is hoped, in view of their concern for endangered forests and certified forest products, they will develop wood purchasing policies in Edmonton that will give positive options for consumers.

As part of this project Edmonton retailers and home builders will be contacted to try to engage their support for a wood purchasing policy that will contribute to the protection of some of our forests, and better forest management of the rest as defined by the requirement of Forest Stewardship Council certification.

## So What is Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) Certification?

FSC is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization. It was founded in 1993 by a diverse group of representatives from environmental and conservation groups, the timber industry, the forestry profession, indigenous peoples' organizations, community forestry groups and others.

The FSC supports environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests.

While there are other certification schemes in Canada and throughout the world, only FSC certification has the support of such conservation groups as World Wildlife Fund, Greenpeace, and Rainforest Action Network. It is also the only certification in demand by the major retailers and homebuilders in the US, including IKEA and Home Depot in Edmonton.

Unfortunately since very few forestry companies have met the high standards of forest planning and practices required by FSC, little FSC certified wood is available to the consumer- and none is available in Edmonton at present.

It is hoped that this Good Wood Project will help to change the situation. We hope that in the near future concerned Edmonton consumers will be able to make an informed choice about what wood to purchase and where to purchase it, so that their decision can have a positive effect on the preservation of the best of the last areas of representative forests, and on improving forest practices.

- *Helene Walsh*

*(The AWA is now a member of the Forest Stewardship Council. Our representative is Jillian Tamblyn, our Conservation Specialist in Edmonton.)*



© Jack Grundle

## Little Smoky: Pipeline and Gas Well Development

### *Excerpts from an AWA Letter to the EUB about our Concerns*

Talisman is working as a mid stream operator to develop a pipeline in the Pinto portion of the Little Smoky candidate area. Anderson Exploration is developing a number of wells to tie into the pipeline. The application for the pipeline does not address the cumulative effects of the entire development.

The proposal for the pipeline is actually only a small portion of the plans Anderson Exploration Limited has for the Pinto area. The cumulative effects surrounding this pipeline include (but are not limited to) tying in five existing wells in the area, drilling five new wells this summer, "very likely" developing follow-up locations and installing a compressor. This pipeline application and CRR does not consider the cumulative effects of these developments or others such as forestry.

The ecological importance of the pipeline location serves to reinforce the need to protect the area from further development. The pipeline route passes through three Provincially Significant and Environmentally Significant Areas (see box).

Donald Creek Drainage - One of the most diverse and extensive Upper Foothills wetland habitat complexes and a Critical Wildlife Zone. It is key winter range for woodland caribou and is habitat for bull trout and grizzly bears.

Middle Berland River - One of the few Alberta rivers containing native Rainbow trout. It is habitat for bull trout, mountain whitefish and Arctic grayling.

Little Smokey Caribou Range - The most southwesterly herd in the province and fastest declining herd in the province.

Alberta Environmental Protection determined this area was one of the 13 best candidate protected areas within the Foothills Natural Region. With two other ESA's, they formed The Little Smoky-Berland-Donald-Pinto Protected Area Complex. This complex "constitutes the most diverse, important and severely threatened, large candidate protected area in the Foothills Natural Region."

The pipeline also falls within the West Central Caribou Range (WCCR). Woodland caribou are classified as an endangered species pursuant to the Alberta Wildlife Act.

*-Jillian Tamblyn*

## Solomon Valley/Little Smoky: Action Alert Solomon Valley Region Under Siege

The Solomon Valley region outside Jasper National Park is about to be logged by Weldwood Forest Products. This foothills area is rich in biological diversity and is the operating area for many local tourist small businesses. The business owners and recreational users who rely on the natural beauty and diversity of the area have been trying to get it protected through government and logging company processes for four years to no avail. Help protect this stunning valley before our window of opportunity closes. Visit our website [www.AlbertaWilderness.ca](http://www.AlbertaWilderness.ca) and see our action alert for Little Smoky or call 283-2025 for a copy. You can send a letter or email directly from the website.

*- Jillian Tamblyn*

## Bighorn Country

Drilling for sour gas has intensified in the northern portion of Bighorn Country, just east of the Wildland boundary. Talisman has completed a new "very successful" well and is tying together a number of previously drilled and newly drilled wells with an intensive pipeline development. Esso has just announced new drilling in the area and Petro Canada is also gearing up to drill. To the south, in the region of the Sheep and Panther Rivers, Shell is conducting an intensive 3-D seismic operation this June and July. They say its results will not take them into the Panther Corners, but it may take them into the Prime Protection Zone of the Burnt Timber in the vicinity of the headwaters of Sheep Creek. Shell would be allowed into the Prime Protection Zone because of "grandfathered rights" established prior to the 1979 Eastern Slopes Policy and zoning.

The Alberta Government hired the services of the McLeod Institute in May 2001 to research and recommend some sort of planning process for the Bighorn area. The Institute's report was due May 31, but we have yet to hear of any planning process announcements.

The AWA has been fortunate to receive funding to hire a new environmental graduate to work on a Bighorn campaign over the next year. Vivian Pharis will be the Board member overseeing this campaign and she has high hopes that at last some significant profile raising for the area and, ultimately, protection, are around the immediate corner.

*- Vivian Pharis*

## Game Farming

This ugly topic has again raised its ugly head in a newly abhorrent manner. Now, game farmers, stuck with around 50,000 head of deer stock and severely depressed markets for meat and sawed off antlers, are awaiting a quiet legislative change that will allow them to salvage their "industry" through "pet shoots" or the "hunting" of penned wildlife. Shooting captive elk will be like shooting Herefords.



*V. Pharis*

And, it's all so predictable. Penned hunts is exactly where the AWA predicted 20 years ago that game farming was heading, whether or not it wanted to go there in the first place. In the early to mid 1980's, the AWA played a significant role in fighting to stop the domestication of our wildlife. The battle then was long, heated, at times gory, and terribly skewed by our own provincial

government in favor of game farmers. Back then, it was difficult to know who was the real enemy - the Alberta Government or the Game Ranching Industry, because they were pretty much one and the same. Early players in the breeding stock pyramid scheme were closely connected to government. In fact, sometimes they were government employees, relatives of sitting members, and even government members themselves. Enabling legislation (Wildlife Policy of 1983) and its Captive Wildlife Regulation were pushed forward in such an arrogant and public-shafting manner that in other jurisdictions, it could have resulted in the fall of a government. But, not in Alberta.

Now we hear that the Klein Government is ready to slip through one final approval for the benefit of their close friends in the sordid business - legislation that will allow domesticated wildlife to be shot in enclosures. Legitimate hunters should be outraged, because if they are out of favor with the general public now, you can imagine how "hunting" is going to be portrayed once pet shoots are legitimized.

The AWA is set to once again step in to defend wildlife and we will be joining forces with the Alliance for Public Wildlife and other groups to do battle. Posting will appear shortly on the AWA's website.

- Vivian Pharis

## Lac La Biche: Attack of the Killer Scapegoats Letter to the Editor, Lac La Biche Post

Dear Sir,

*Here's a riddle from Lac la Biche. Question: What's black and eats fish? Answer: A scapegoat.*

*To anyone who cares about protecting Alberta's environment, Lac la Biche (LLB) is reminiscent of one of those old horror movie series. Just when you thought it was safe...up pops another eco-illiterate, complete with a "Nature must be conquered" frontier mentality straight from the Dark Ages.*

*This time it's rookie, LLB-St. Paul Tory MLA Ray Danyluk, with his ludicrous claim (on CBC Radio's "Wild Rose Country", May 9, 2001) that the demise of LLB's commercial fishery is due to predation by the Region's expanding population of Double-crested Cormorants. Where do the Tories get these guys? They must have a factory somewhere that churns out environmentally challenged demagogues. First, of course, it was Lorne Taylor (the province's latest Environment Minister - now that's scary!) who wants to wipe out the province's entire population of Richardson's Ground Squirrels (gophers) - the rodent that just happens to be the keystone species around which much of the ecology of the Grasslands revolves. Now the stage is set for Mr. Danyluk's sequel to Hitchcock's masterpiece "The Birds", tentatively titled "The Cormorants Are Coming, The Cormorants Are Coming!"*

*Mr. Danyluk's campaign is a transparent attempt to score cheap political points. How much simpler it is to whip up hatred against defenseless black birds than to tell your constituents a few hard truths. Naturally, Mr. Danyluk's rhetoric will play well with LLB's coffee-klatch brigade, who never allows a few inconvenient facts to interfere with their enviro-phobic rabble-rousing.*

*So, what are the facts? Alberta Fish and Wildlife surveys show that during PEAK years, a grand total of 2,800 pairs of cormorants nest in the whole of the LLB Region. A far cry from the*

*"millions" or "quarter of a million" claimed by Mr. Danyluk.*

*Second, a detailed study of the diets of cormorants in the colonies on Lake Winnipegosis (Manitoba), which has more birds than Alberta and Saskatchewan combined, was published in 1989 by Dr. Keith Hobson and his colleagues. They showed that the cormorants fed primarily on Yellow Perch, White Suckers and other forage fish, and that "commercially valuable species" accounted for a maximum of only 0.3% of the total prey biomass consumed. A recent analysis of the diets of cormorant fledglings on Lac La Biche yielded similar results. Other research on a number of eastern North American cormorant colonies shows clearly that, in every case, the cormorants are taking only a fraction of 1% of the total fish biomass available.*

*So why are cormorant populations increasing? Hobson and his co-workers' conclusion is that "excessive commercial exploitation of large predatory fish" (e.g., walleye and pike) allows forage fish populations to expand dramatically, which in turn, due to the greater availability of their preferred prey, results in an increased abundance of cormorants.*

*Any commercial fishermen genuinely anxious to track down the principal culprits in the repeated decimation of LLB's fishery need only take a good long look in the mirror.*

*The LLB area has the potential to become one of North America's top destinations for Boreal Forest birdwatching. However, with annual forest clearance rates (from 1950 to 1995) greater than those in Amazonia (between 1975 to 1988); with publicly owned jewels like Sir Winston Churchill Provincial Park being degraded for private sector profit; and with the continuing deterioration of Lac La Biche itself due to pollution and development, the Region's environmental future looks far from rosy. To live up to its promise as an eco-tourism hub, LLB will need progressive leadership and a radical adjustment of the entrenched traditionalist attitudes of local politicians and businessmen.*

*Alternatively, perhaps Mr. Danyluk's vision will triumph and LLB will achieve 'fame' as a national laughingstock - the cormorant-culling capital of Canada.*

*Yours sincerely,  
Richard G. Thomas (Ph.D.)*

## The Waterton Gate Affair Excerpts from an article by Cheryl Bradley

Despite an Environics poll that showed about 70% of County residents did not want it, Cardston County Council approved the rezoning of agricultural land to allow grouped country residential development at the east gate of Waterton Lakes National Park. The March 12 decision to approve third reading, however, was not unanimous, as first and second readings had been. Two of six councilors opposed the rezoning.

The decision by County Council to allow rezoning fails to reflect the majority of public opinion within and outside of the County and contradicts six of eight objectives of the 1999 Municipal Development Plan for Cardston County. Municipal objectives encourage protecting agricultural land, locating non-agricultural uses near existing hamlets and cooperating with neighbours.

Given that the rezoning will stand, the proponent's next step will be to make subdivision application to the County's Municipal Planning Commission. One can reasonably expect that the County's Municipal Planning Commission will request an area structure plan should the proponent seek subdivision approval.

So far, the proponent, Mr. James Garner, has initiated an assessment of impacts on historical resources, as Alberta Community Development required this prior to the public hearing.

Mr. James Garner, a former Highways Minister in Grant Devine's government in Saskatchewan, is the individual proposing this development. His decision about whether to proceed to subdivision application may be influenced by direct appeal or by sending him copies of correspondence addressed to others. His address is Box 98, Waterton Park, AB, T0L 2M0.

The provincial and federal governments have an interest in several matters that need to be considered as part of an area structure plan, including effects on the Waterton River, effects on wildlife, effects on historical resources, effects on viewscape as it relates to tourism planning, fire management planning, slope setback distances, water supply, sewage disposal and roads. Letters to MLAs and MPs and to Premier Ralph Klein or Prime Minister Jean Chretien to make them aware of concerns with respect to these matters may influence provincial and federal government review of the proposal. Letters should stress the need for mechanisms to assist with informed and co-operative land use decisions among Cardston County, the Municipal District of Pincher Creek, Parks Canada and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. Expropriation also is an option.

Citizens within Cardston County are forming an organization to work on issues of municipal land use planning particularly as they relate to protection of ranchland. A newsletter has been prepared and mailed to households in the County. There will be an opportunity to raise subdivision issues during this fall's municipal election.

*County residents can get actively involved by contacting Craig Smith (403-626-3924) or Gordon Grinder (403-626-3658). Anyone from outside Cardston County wanting more information on this issue can contact Cheryl Bradley by phone 403-328-1245, by e-mail cbradley@telusplanet.net or by regular mail addressed to 625-18 St. S., Lethbridge, AB T1J 3E9.*

## **Yellowstone to Yukon Vision Closer to Reality Every Day**

The Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative is an ambitious vision to connect the wildlands and wildlife along the spine of the Rocky Mountains from the Grand Tetons and Wind River Range in Wyoming, through Yellowstone National Park, along the mountains of the Great Divide and north to the Snake, Peel, Wind and Bonnet Plume Rivers in the Yukon. It is a region of spectacular natural beauty, healthy thriving communities, and abundant wildlife and wildlands.

The Yellowstone to Yukon vision is simply to keep this region intact: economically, socially and ecologically. By con-

necting people with nature, communities with each other, and by connecting protected areas together with wildlife movement corridors, the Yellowstone to Yukon vision is one of a sustainable future: both for people, and for nature.

The Alberta Wilderness Association has been involved in Yellowstone to Yukon since the start. Today, we continue to play a vital role in determining how best to realize this necessary, and achievable vision.

The AWA will play a critical role in the next year by helping prepare a conservation area design for the Central Rockies portion of the Yellowstone to Yukon. For thirty years we have been strong advocates for many of the necessary pieces of the puzzle that make up the Y2Y protected areas and corridors vision. Our recent success in helping protect the Kananaskis and Spray Valleys, and the Whaleback, are making Y2Y a reality!

Without connectivity between protected areas like Banff and Jasper, with the larger landscape around them, we know that wildlife cannot survive. We also are learning that without connection between communities and nature, our economy will not be sustainable. As small towns like Turner Valley, Longview and Black Diamond embrace landscapes like Kananaskis Country as a way to diversify their economies and bring stability to their future, they recognize that to do so requires that the mountains and foothills remain part of a healthy natural ecosystem.

Yellowstone to Yukon ties the efforts of groups like the Alberta Wilderness Association to a larger vision. Our work in Alberta is part of an effort made by nearly 400 groups, individuals, native leaders, business leaders and academics to ensure the future of the Yellowstone to Yukon region is prosperous, both economically and ecologically.

You can help. The AWA is working to protect many of the landscapes in the Yellowstone to Yukon region. Our efforts to complete the Elbow Sheep Wildland Park, protect the Castle Crown Wilderness and the Bighorn Wildlands are vital to the vision for Y2Y. You can participate by joining WIN - the AWA's free on-line program to provide you with the tools you need to protect the places you love. Simply visit <http://www.AlbertaWilderness.ca> and click "Join WIN." It's fast, free and effective.

**- Stephen Legault  
First Vice President, AWA**



© Jack Grundle

# ASSOCIATION NEWS

## Where is the AWA Going?

By Cliff Wallis, President



A few members have recently expressed concern over the AWA's direction. Let me assure you that the AWA has never been sharper or healthier. We remain true to our grassroots origins and continue to defend wild Alberta and advocate for the protection of big wilderness and its wildlife. Over the last four years, the AWA Board of Directors has changed our approach to managing the organization. We have sought ways to make ourselves more effective with scarce resources

recently entered into a market-based campaign and are working on a variety of levels to halt the damage that resource extraction industries are doing to wilderness. We have applied for membership on the Forest Stewardship Council and are acting as an advisor on the Canadian Standards Association Sustainable Forest Management Technical Committee. These organizations set standards for certification of forest management and our active involvement will help set the bar that companies must meet to get products certified. On the consumer side, we have been working with various retailers to get their commitment not to source wood products from our endangered wildlands.

We are also studying bold new initiatives. The first will gauge public and member views on eliminating industrial forestry south of the Trans-Canada Highway, starting with Kananaskis Country. It is a case that we think can be easily made from water supply, ecological, social, economic and recreation perspectives.

by focusing on three areas:

1. advocating for the protection of big wilderness,
2. reactivating the grassroots, and
3. board governance.

We continue to demonstrate our commitment by taking action on wilderness protection province wide. This includes leadership roles on Yellowstone to Yukon (especially Kananaskis, Bighorn, and Foothills) as well as Prairie and Parkland issues. We are also studying how we might best be involved in Boreal Forest issues now that we have an effective conservation staff in Edmonton and have developed some expertise in market campaigns.

The AWA Board has evolved from a "hands-on" micro-management board to a governance board. The Board receives advice from members, activists and staff and, at the annual planning meeting each September, sets forth the AWA's strategic approach in all program areas. Based on this, staff develop and carry out their annual work plans with assistance from volunteers and watchdogs in the field. This allows for more creativity from staff and volunteers to accomplish program ends. It also reduces the burden on board members and makes the most effective use of their valuable time. Some board members still volunteer in a myriad of other ways, from website development to advocacy campaigns and fund-raising but that work is distinct from their board roles of governance and leadership.

To reactivate the grassroots, we have engaged in more community and member events and raised our profile in the media. We activated a Wilderness Network (WIN) and entered into a partnership with Wildcanada.net to use the Internet in our outreach work. This will provide Albertans with reliable information and easy to use and effective tools to influence decisions regarding our wildlands and wildlife. The initial response has been gratifying and those numbers are continuing to grow.

The AWA is setting the agenda on wilderness protection and is never one to shy away from controversy. We have

By focusing on governance and hiring an Executive Director, we have been able to provide leadership on more issues, including the controversy over the recently announced feasibility study of the Meridian Dam. We have also increased communications with members and have greatly improved our short term and long-term financial viability. In short, our board, staff, volunteers and membership are all re-energized. Some big wilderness victories are now in sight. While there is still much to do in achieving our goals, it is heartening to see your renewed interest and support. We are always looking for new board members -- if you are interested in helping the AWA maintain its leadership role, please call me at (403) 271-1408. ☐



© Jack Grundle

## Staff



Joleen Timko, Conservation Specialist, Joins AWA Staff

I cultivated an appreciation for the natural environment at a very early age, partially stemming from annual visits to my family's cabin in a remote part of the Shuswap. After pursuing a B.Sc. in wildlife biology and environmental studies at UVIC, I recently completed my M.Sc. in Resource Management and Environmental Studies at UBC. My thesis was focused on the role that local ecological knowledge can play in wildlife conservation. My ongoing concern is with the social implications of conservation, and with the need to involve local people, their knowledge, and experiences in wildlife conservation initiatives.

## Update on WIN: The Wilderness Network

WIN is a joint effort between the Alberta Wilderness Association and Wildcanada.net to provide people from across Alberta with free electronic tools to help them protect big wilderness in Alberta.

Launched in February of 2001, the project has attracted almost 500 people from every corner of the province. People register for WIN online, and receive free weekly updates on provincial and national issues prepared by Wildcanada.net and the AWA. These action alerts are short, timely and provide a quick and effective suggestion to take action that is making a real difference. A recent action alert on the Meridian Dam in southern Alberta's grasslands has resulted in hundreds of letters to the Premier on this issue, and helped propel the issue to the national stage!

In addition to regular action alerts, Wildcanada.net and the AWA provide dynamic on-line Action Centres where visitors can learn about issues from across Canada and send a free fax to decision makers about important wildland and wildlife issues. Our Action Centre on the Castle Crown Wilderness has resulted in nearly 2000 faxes to the Premier and his cabinet since February!

WIN is helping protect Alberta's wilderness. You can take WIN for a test drive, or join for free by visiting <http://www.AlbertaWilderness.ca> or <http://www.wildcanada.net>.

## Rumsey Aspen Parkland Hike

On Saturday, June 16, Dorothy Dickson led a guided tour of Rumsey Aspen Parkland. The following letter was received shortly after. Many thanks to Dorothy for her dedicated work in Rumsey.

*Dear AWA,  
I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the amazing walk with Dorothy Dickson that the Alberta Wilderness Association for arranged on Saturday. Dorothy's knowledge and enthusiasm was wonderful and very contagious as spending the day with her prompted me to join your association. I look forward to participating in future hikes. Thank you! Andree Powers*

## Summer Outreach Program



Hi. My name is Nigel Douglas, and I'm this year's Summer Outreach Project Coordinator for the AWA. I'm going to be spending the summer spreading the word about the AWA, raising awareness of what it is we do, and encouraging people to take part in some of the campaigns. I'm going to be traveling to Provincial Parks throughout

Alberta, and running promotional events at a couple of camping stores, so I think I'm going to be kept pretty busy!

I worked for several years in the conservation industry in the United Kingdom, initially for a bird conservation charity, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and later managing Local Nature Reserves for a Local Authority. There are definitely many similarities between conservation here in Alberta and conservation in the UK: basically, we're trying to hang on to the crucial wildlife areas that are left. At the same time, there are also many differences principally the sheer scale upon which everything operates in Alberta. I've learnt a tremendous amount already, and hopefully will continue to do so.

This summer's program of AWA Outreach events has now been drawn up. We will be setting up displays about the activities and campaigns of the AWA at various campsites and retail venues throughout Alberta, trying to raise the profile of the AWA, and encourage people to become more involved in wilderness issues in the province.

We need volunteers who would be willing to spend a couple of hours helping to man our display at any of these venues. If you can spare the time to help, then please call Nigel Douglas, Summer Outreach Project Coordinator at (403) 283-2025.

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| • Sat., June 30 & Sun., July 1 | Barrier Lake, Kananaskis   |
| • Saturday, July 21            | Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park                                 |
| • Sunday, July 22              | Cypress Hills Provincial Park                                    |
| • Saturday, July 28            | Mountain Equipment Co-op, Edmonton Sat & Sun                     |
| • August, 4, 5                 | Royal Tyrrell Museum, Dinosaur Provincial Park (to be confirmed) |
| • Saturday, August 11          | Mountain Equipment Co-op, Calgary                                |
| • Saturday, August 18          | Sir Winston Churchill Provincial Park                            |
| • Sunday, August 19            | Lakeland Provincial Park   |
| • Sat. & Sun., Sept. 1 & 2     | Barrier Lake, Kananaskis   |

## Volunteers



Hello, my name is Ni Made Diah Kesuma Wardhani, from Indonesia. I am working with AWA as part of my participating in Canadian Crossroads International's (CCI) To-Canada Program. I am doing a four month volunteer work exchange program in sustainable development beginning in June 2001. I am going to spend my summer with the AWA doing some research in conservation, searching public library Internet news on various topics, and participating in the Open House summer hikes program in threatened areas. I will accompany Peter Sherrington on his Golden Eagle observation in Kananaskis Country and I will also spend a week in Edmonton helping Jillian Tamblyn. This should be a very worthwhile placement for me.

I find working with the AWA is helping me to gain more knowledge in conservation issues, because I am surrounded by wilderness and wildlife information. It is giving me a new experience with working abroad. I love the spirit of AWA in protecting nature and all the things that live in it. I am developing a new perception that "we must protect it now, before it's all too late". I would like to say thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. I will learn as much as I can here and hopefully be able to use it in my country.

## Hiking Canada's Great Divide Trail



Dustin Lynx provided guests at an AWA Open House, May 29, with a fascinating look at hiking the Great Divide Trail. His excellent guidebook is available from Rocky Mountain Books in Calgary, [www.rmbooks.com](http://www.rmbooks.com).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Open House Program

**July 7, 2001**

#### Big Sagebrush Natural Area:

a guided hike with Dave Sheppard and Reg Ernest.  
Call 283-2025 to pre-register and get directions.

#### Calgary:

Location: Hillhurst Room, AWA, 455 - 12 St. NW, Calgary  
Time: 7:00 pm  
Cost: \$4.00 per person, children free

**Sept. 11, 2001**

#### Sour Gas and Public Safety

with Richard Secord

**October 16, 2001**

#### Bears with Brian Horejsi

**Wilderness Celebration**

**2001**

**Alberta Wilderness Association**  
13th Annual Fundraising Celebration  
With Amos Garrett  
Saturday, October 20th, 2001 @ 6:00 pm  
Glenmore Inn, Calgary  
Call for tickets 283-2025

**\$75**  
a ticket

AWA

## Profile: Jack Grundle, Wildlife Artist

In this issue we feature the work of Jack Grundle, a well-known wildlife artist. You can learn more about Mr. Grundle and his work at several websites, including his own, [www3.telus.net/jackgrundlesfca](http://www3.telus.net/jackgrundlesfca).

See also [www.artincanada.com/jackgrundle](http://www.artincanada.com/jackgrundle). We would like to thank Mr. Grundle for giving his permission to use his artwork in the Wild Lands Advocate.

**October 26, 2001**

### Alberta Wilderness Trust Annual Lecture

with Dr. David Schindler

Wine and Cheese Reception, 6:30 pm

Lecture: 7:30 pm

Cost: \$25.00

Call: 283-2025 for reservations

Editorial Board:  
Shirley Bray  
Peter Sherrington  
Andy Marshall

Web Host: [qbiz.ca](http://qbiz.ca)  
Please direct questions  
and comments to  
Shirley Bray

Graphic Designer:  
Crystal Cochrane

Phone: 270-2736  
Fax: 270-2743  
[awa.wrc@home.com](mailto:awa.wrc@home.com)  
[www.AlbertaWilderness.ca](http://www.AlbertaWilderness.ca)

Printer:  
MRC Document Services

# SUPPORT ALBERTA WILDERNESS

"Our quality of life, our health, and a healthy economy are totally dependent on Earth's biological diversity. We cannot replicate natural ecosystems. Protected areas are internationally recognized as the most efficient way to maintain biological diversity" - **Richard Thomas**

The Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) is dedicated to protecting wildlands, wildlife and wild waters throughout Alberta. Your valued contribution will assist with all areas of the AWA's work. We offer the following categories for your donation. The Provincial Office of the AWA hosts wall plaques recognizing donors in the "Defender" or greater category. Please support Alberta's wilderness by supporting the conservation work of the AWA.

Alberta Wilderness Association	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporter	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Defender	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate	\$250
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Philanthropist	\$1000
<input type="checkbox"/> Wilderness Circle	\$2500 - \$5000

Alberta Wilderness Resource Centre	
<input type="checkbox"/> Friend	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Partner	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$1000
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron - greater than \$1000	



## Wild Lands Advocate Journal

Research and Investigative Reporting, Publication and Distribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Alberta Wilderness Trust** - an endowment fund established with The Calgary Foundation to support the long-term sustainability of the Alberta Wilderness Association. For further details, please contact our Calgary office (403) 283-2025.

The AWA is a federally registered charity and functions through member and donor support. Tax-deductible donations may be made to the Association at:  
 Box 6398 Station D, Calgary, AB T2P 2E1. Telephone (403) 283-2025 Fax (403) 270-2743  
 E-mail a.w.a@home.com Website <http://www.AlbertaWilderness.ca>

Cheque  Visa  M/C  
 I wish to donate monthly by automatic withdrawal from my bank account.  
 I have enclosed a void cheque for processing. Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/Prov. \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (home): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (work): \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Open House Program

July 7, 2001  
**Big Sagebrush  
 Natural Area**

Sept. 11, 2001  
**Sour Gas and  
 Public Safety**

October 16, 2001  
**Bears**

October 26, 2001  
**Alberta Wilderness  
 Trust Annual Lecture  
 with David Schindler**

See inside for details...



**The Alberta Wilderness Association**  
 Box 6398, Station D  
 Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E1

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement  
 No. 485535 • ISSN# 1192 6287

