



Dear {FIRST_NAME|Wilderness Defender},

Alberta's new government will be acting soon on an election promise to protect the Castle – **they need to hear from Albertans today!**

Please take a few minutes to write to the Alberta Minister of Environment and Parks to support the legislated protection of the entire 1,020 km² Castle Special Management Area as a Wildland Provincial Park. This designation will be an important (and long overdue!!) conservation achievement for Alberta and will demonstrate the seriousness of our new government's commitment to environmental leadership.

Thank you for making your voice heard!

-Brittany Verbeek, AWA Conservation Specialist

AWA Wilderness & Wildlife Defenders:

Write to Encourage our New AB Government to Protect the Castle as a Wildland Provincial Park - once and for all!

AWA

www.AlbertaWilderness.ca

[1-866-313-0713](tel:1-866-313-0713)



Photo Credit: R. Pisko

Background

The Castle Wilderness is a region of outstanding wilderness values. With numerous overlapping ecosystems in one relatively small area, the Castle Wilderness contains high animal and plant species diversity. It is also an essential piece of an ecological puzzle; the Castle connects Canadian and US National Parks to the south and the Flathead Basin to the west with those habitats and populations in the mountains and foothills to the north.

Reasons to Protect the Castle

- Alberta's premier source of flowing water for much of southern Alberta
- Profound cultural and sacred value to the Nitsitapii, Piikani [Peigan], Siksika, Kainaiwa [Blood] and Blackfoot First Nations, as well as the Nakoda [Stoney]

and K'tunaxa [Kootenay] First Nations.

- Outstanding opportunities for heritage appreciation and outdoor recreation, including low impact recreation in all seasons (guiding, fishing, hiking, outfitting, hunting, bird-watching, wildlife photography, camping, berry picking)
- Highest biological diversity in Alberta; a unique abundance of rare and endangered plant and animal species.
- Encompasses Alberta's second largest montane landscape, which is the most biologically productive natural sub-region of the Rocky Mountains.
- Crucial to the state and health of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem and the greater chain of Rocky Mountain ecosystems by virtue of its strategic location.
- Rare landforms and climatic patterns; unique natural features.

Despite 50 years of demands for protection of the Castle Wilderness, the pace of ecological degradation continues and no meaningful protection has been legislated.

Recently, through Alberta's land use planning process, 54,588 ha of the Castle was designated as a Wildland Provincial Park. Unfortunately, the majority of critical wildlife zones and areas of rich biodiversity and high watershed value remain outside those designated park boundaries. (see map to the right) This means that industrial logging and poorly managed motorized recreation use continues.

During the last election campaign, the party that now forms Alberta's government promised to better protect the Castle. How this promise will be upheld and what it will look like has yet to be determined.

Take Action

Help make our government's Castle decision meaningful and swift by writing to:

Honourable Shannon Phillips
Minister of Environment and Parks
AEP.Minister@gov.ab.ca

And please copy:

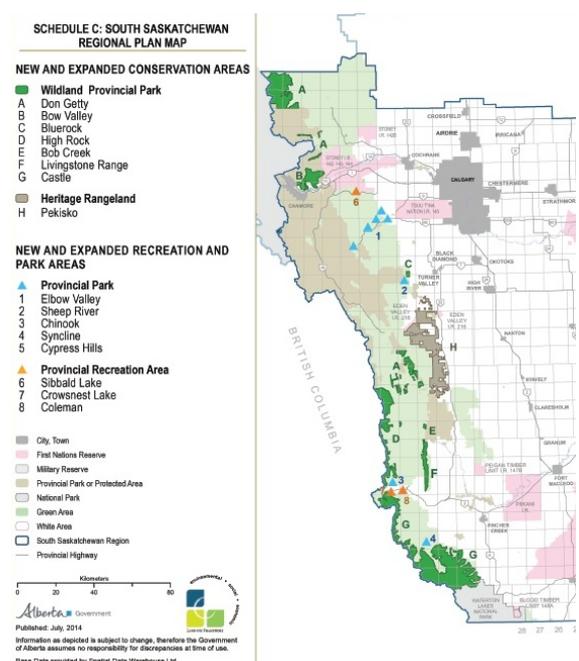
- Honourable Oneil Carlier



Photo Credit: N. Douglas



Photo Credit: B. Verbeek



Map credit: Alberta Government

Minister of Agriculture and Forestry

ARD.Minister.M@gov.ab.ca

- Your local MLA
- Brittany Verbeek, AWA Conservation Specialist
bverbeek@abwild.ca

When you write to Minister Phillips, consider including several of the 'reasons to protect' (listed above) that mean most to you, and please ask her to:

1. **Protect the entire Castle Special Management Area** (all 1020 km² of it) as a Wildland Provincial Park.
2. **Stop clearcut logging** (scheduled to begin this winter after a 3-year moratorium)
3. **Ban Off Highway Vehicle (OHV) use**, except on specially designated trails that place watershed protection first.

More Information and Resources

For more information, please visit our website's [Castle page](#).

To read a letter written by Castle Crown Wilderness Coalition and endorsed by AWA, CPAWS, and CCCI to Minister Phillips on June 1, 2015 regarding protecting the Castle, click [here](#).

To read the *Castle Special Place Conceptual Proposal for Legislated Protected Areas*, submitted by Castle Special Place Citizens' Initiative to Alberta Minister for Tourism Parks and Recreation, October 2009, click [here](#).

Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action



Photo Credit: N. Douglas



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