

Public Lands Should Not be Sold to Mackenzie County

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A recent proposal to sell 140,000 hectares of Alberta public lands to Mackenzie County would convert vital boreal native habitat into agricultural lands and grazing reserves.

Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) does not support the sale and conversion of public lands, an important finite public resource. AWA believes any proposal to sell and convert public lands must have a thorough consultation process that engages local indigenous communities and the general public.

“Selling and converting public lands without notification or consultation is unacceptable,” says Nissa Petterson, AWA Conservation Specialist. “Public lands within Mackenzie County contain highly productive tracts of land that provide countless ecological goods and services, in addition to vital habitat and

corridors for wildlife, all of which are essential to the quality of life of surrounding communities.”

AWA is concerned that the sale and conversion of these public lands will have severe impacts on the species at risk within the region. Threatened woodland caribou, endangered wood bison and countless migratory birds all have ranges within Mackenzie County, and depend on these contiguous landscapes for survival. Conserving the boreal forest and its accompanying wetlands from conversion is integral to combating climate change given the considerable amount of carbon that is sequestered in these areas.

Since the founding of the organization, AWA has consistently defended the natural integrity of Alberta’s public lands and the need for a publicly developed policy that addresses the sales, management, access and conservation of Alberta’s public lands.

For more information:

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Dedicated to the conservation of wilderness and completion of a protected areas network, AWA inspires communities to care for Alberta's wild spaces through awareness and action.

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