

CLEAR-CUT LOGGING IN KANANASKIS

Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition PUBLIC MEETING at The Bragg Creek Centre, Thursday, June 15, 8 p.m.

Kananaskis needs your help. Spray Lakes Sawmills, through a Forest Management Agreement with the government, determines where and when they'll clear-cut the forest. Kananaskis Country should be designated a recreation area. Authority over use of the area should be the sole responsibility of Alberta Community Development, Parks and Protected Areas.

Under the Forest Management Agreement, the primary use of the forest management area is "for establishing, growing, harvesting and removing timber." Kananaskis is an industrial development zone. Many assume that it is protected. But, the only "protected" areas are the parking lots at the trailheads and the inaccessible alpine areas. Most of Kananaskis, the areas where people hike, cycle, ski and otherwise enjoy a true wilderness experience, is primarily designated as industrial. We need to reconsider this policy. The primary use of the Sheep, Elbow and Jumpingpound districts should be recreational not industrial. Hundreds of people will have to voice their concern. Tourism and recreation interests will have to work towards that goal. Business people along the foothills will have to become advocates for keeping the Country in Kananaskis.

It's a triple whammy

1 Natural gas companies have plowed roads, pipelines and cleared well sites throughout Kananaskis.

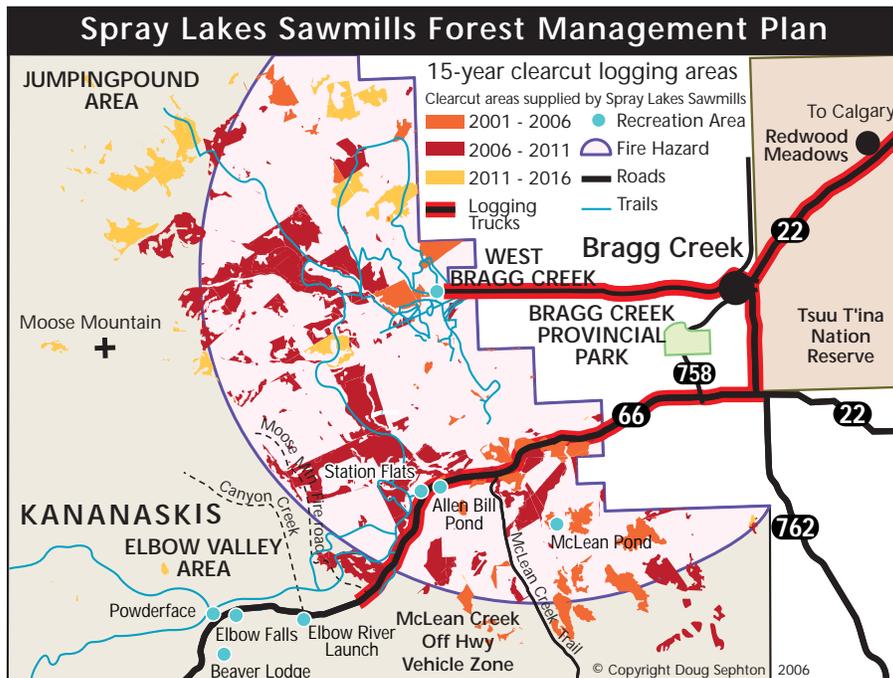
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2 The TransRockies mountain bike race won't come to Alberta because Kananaskis has limited the number of participants.

3 Now Spray Lakes Sawmills will clear-cut vast tracts of the forest.

This is not solely an environmental issue. It affects people who recreate in Kananaskis and business people who provide products and services to them.

People and wildlife are being pushed out of Kananaskis. Industry is pooping in our playground. Tourism and recreation is suffering. David Coutts, Alberta Minister of Sustainable Resources talks about balancing preservation and exploitation, but he's talking to influential corporations who are pressing for increased access to exploit the resources in Alberta's wilderness. Polls show that Albertans want to protect their natural heritage, but the government can't hear the sound of one hand clapping. Only environmentalists have taken up the cause. There is a disconnect between our desire to protect our natural heritage and our perception of environmental advocacy.



When you express your concern about the health and safety of your family due to sour gas wells a few kilometres upwind from your home, government and industry say they are

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just following the rules - doing what they are mandated to do. The government claims to be good stewards of the land, but they have transferred management of the land to the loggers and the energy sector through management agreements. They site threats from forest fires and pine beetles as justification for clearing the land of 75% of its trees. Natural cycles of bug infestations and fire throughout time have never created as much damage to the overall ability of the forest to sustain itself as does clear-cut logging.

A steady stream of trucks and heavy equipment rumble along our highways and rural roads into Kananaskis where new and improved roads and work sites are cut into the wilderness. There is virtually nowhere they can't and won't go. They are dangerous and destructive.

Natural habitat is disappearing, replaced with barren land where mud and silt erode into creeks and rivers wreaking havoc on our water supply. This is not sustainable. It is irreparable damage. When the land can heal, it will take generations to do so. The old growth trees they're cutting are over 170-years-old. What will future generations think of us? Maybe they won't care, because they won't know what was lost.

We know what we're losing. We should do something now before it's gone. In five years time, much of the forest will be gone, along with the animals that lived

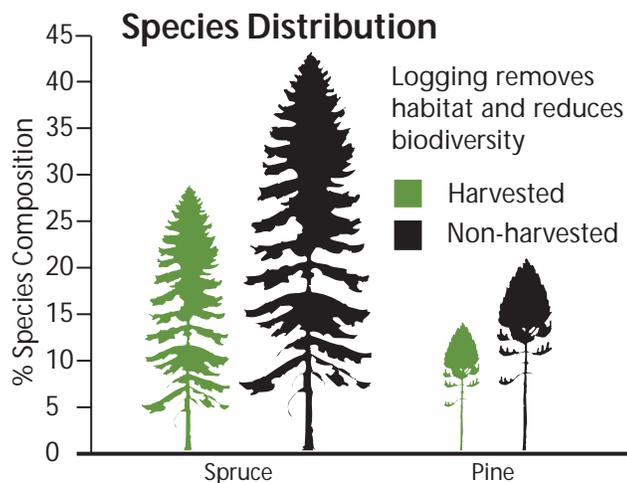
there. Our landscape will be transformed and we'll have to drive to Banff to enjoy the outdoors.

Spray Lakes has management authority over 3374 square kilometres of the foothills from Sundre to the southern end of Kananaskis. Of this, approximately 2224 square kilometres is available for timber harvesting. They plan to cut about 50,000 trees a year or 380,000 cubic metres every five years (a tree the size of a telephone pole is equivalent to 1 cubic metre).

A total of 325 species of vertebrate wildlife have potential to occur in the Spray Lakes Sawmills territory. Of these 257 are birds, 59 are mammals, 7 are amphibians and 2 are reptiles. The company's Detailed Forest Management Plan or DFMP calls for wildlife monitoring. But their impact will be so great, no comparison will be possible. They maintain that logging will do what forest fires and insects do, that is, regenerate the forest. Yeah sure. And if they bulldozed your home, you could build a new and better one. They say that the forest will be healthier, supporting a more diverse ecosystem. But, scientific studies show the diversity of species is reduced due to clear-cutting and the natural process of regeneration cannot be replaced by replanting clear-cuts.

Help protect Kananaskis and the critters that live there. The DFMP will be finalized on June 23, 2006.

This 2006 satellite image shows the West Bragg Creek Area of Kananaskis with Moose Mountain in the lower left. The current clearcuts are visible as light green areas.



Source: Petawawa National Forestry Institute, Canadian Forest Service

What to do? Stay informed. Visit www.braggcreek.ca/forest. Sign-up for news. Write or phone our elected officials to tell them you want Kananaskis protected.

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