

SAVE KANANASKIS IT'S WORTH IT

Bragg Creek
Environmental
Coalition
OPEN HOUSE
Bragg Creek Centre,
March 29, 7:30 P.M.

Opinions, observations and a few facts that provide an overview of plans to clearcut Kananaskis. March 2007

Timeline

2006
JUNE

Little new information has been provided nor any consultation occurred since June 2006, the deadline for public input on Spray Lakes Sawmills (SLS) Detailed Forest Management Plan (DFMP).

SEPT.
- DEC.

Public concern (letters sent to SLS and SRD) called for consultation and a halt to logging in the eastern districts. Backed by concern over water quality and quantity from the City of Calgary, SRD has delayed approval of the DFMP.

SLS delayed submission of the plan to Alberta Sustainable Resource Development (SRD) from September to December of 2006.

During the delay, concern over the pine beetle increased. The review is continuing.

The DFMP called for extensive clearcuts in West Bragg Creek and throughout eastern and southern Kananaskis over 20 years and beyond.

2007
FEB.

In February, 2007 Spray Lakes held an exhibition to unveil a revised plan. The focus had shifted from fire in Bragg Creek to the pine beetle in Sibbald. The plan to clearcut in the Sibbald district, harvesting pine before the beetles infect them was submitted to Sustainable Resource Development on Feb. 28.

SRD plans to speed the harvest of trees in advance of the pine beetle threat. They say that 75% of susceptible lodgepole pines should be harvested. Most of Kananaskis is lodgepole pine. Approval of the revised plan is expected in April or May.

2001-
2026

The government directs policy for resource development, but transferred management of the forest resource to SLS in 2001 through the Forest Management Agreement (FMA). The DFMP shows where, when and how they will exploit that resource over 20 years.

Under the FMA, the primary use of the forest management area is "for establishing, growing, harvesting and removing timber."

Logging in Sibbald will apparently begin in the spring/summer of 2007.

MAR.

The C5 Forest Management Plan is deferred until the Oldman Watershed Report is reviewed.

March 29, The Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition public information session.

JULY

Adult beetles emerge and spread in July.



Photo credits: Kalevi Sissonen, Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service

PINE BEETLE

Pine beetles bore through lodgepole pine bark, laying eggs between the bark and wood. They cut off the flow of nutrients and produce a fungus that combats the tree's defence mechanism and kills it.

The fungus stains the wood blue reducing its market value. Blue stained pine is sold under the "denim pine" brand. It has some advantageous tensile, social and aesthetic properties.

The market for lumber is saturated as infested forests are harvested. In a few years lumber will be in short supply. Clearcutting susceptible forests now will make the situation worse.

The impact of the pine beetle can be reduced by broadening forest biodiversity. Partial cutting and thinning maintains a vigorous forest and preserves many other

attractive and beneficial forest qualities.

B.C. forests have been ravaged by the mountain pine beetle. Nothing foresters have done to fight the infestation has slowed the beetle's spread.

Global warming creates conditions in which the pine beetle can thrive.

Alberta has mature lodgepole pine forests that are susceptible to forest fire and pine beetle, but trees are smaller and drier. Pine beetles normally don't attack trees of 10 cm diameter or less.

The Alberta climate is cooler than B.C.. Beetles die in extreme cold.

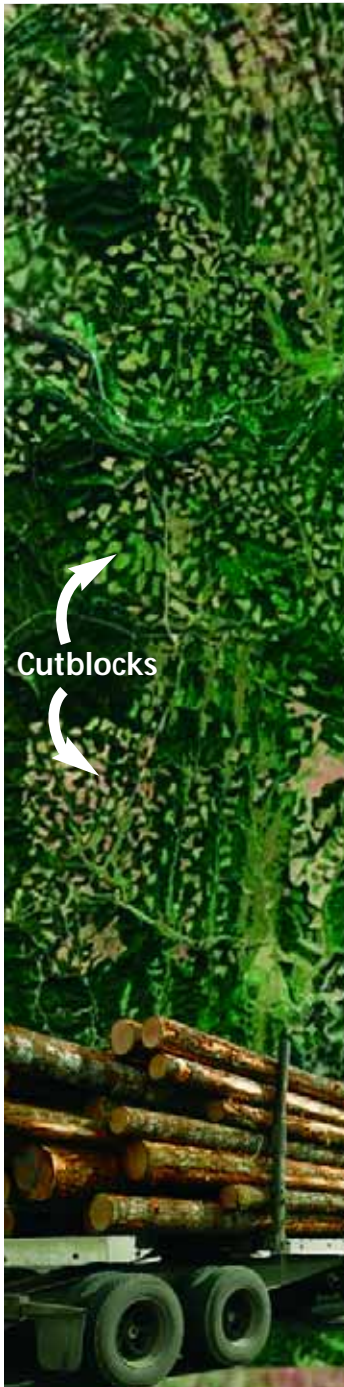
Beetles fly and spread when blown by the wind.

Foresters combat beetles by burning infected trees.

Clearcutting opens the forest allowing beetles to spread further and faster.

LOGGING

Clearcuts remove habitat for animals, are cooler or hotter depending on the season. The Canadian Forest Service recommends thinning forests over clearcuts. Thin forests retain some of the visual appeal and natural benefits of the



Google Earth view of logging in the Ghost/Waiparous west of Sundre

forest. Removing older, larger trees makes the forest less attractive to beetles and provides better growing conditions for young trees.

The effects of deforestation by logging are immediate and significant. Thinned forests or those left to the natural process of degeneration/regeneration after a beetle infestation will suffer gradual and less severe impacts.

Clear-cut forests are not ecologically equivalent to fire damage or bug infested forests.

Logging:

- ◆ removes nutrients (in trees)
- ◆ damages topsoil
- ◆ causes more nutrients to leach out of ecosystem
- ◆ produces a different community of plants and animals
- ◆ produces a landscape different from natural disturbances (patch sizes & shapes).

Clearcutting forests creates an imbalance in rivers and watersheds. Less water is retained, flooding is more likely, spring snowmelt will occur earlier, rates of flow in summer and fall will change. Surface soil erodes, fish habitat is lost, landslides are more likely, water quality is poor and disturbed land is less productive.



Logged land near Cataract Creek, Kananaskis

Photo credits: David Bourne, Doug Sephton

Spray Lakes is currently cutting hundreds of thousands of trees annually in southern Kananaskis and in the Ghost/Waiparous, near Sundre, under the Forest Management Agreement

Spray Lakes Sawmills plans on logging 1600 hectares of Kananaskis annually.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

One of the principle points of concern in June was the lack of consultation with recreation and environmental interests regarding the "Detailed Forest Management Plan" for logging Kananaskis.

No consultations with representatives of these interests have taken place. A Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition request for a meeting with Ted Morton in February, 2007 received no reply.

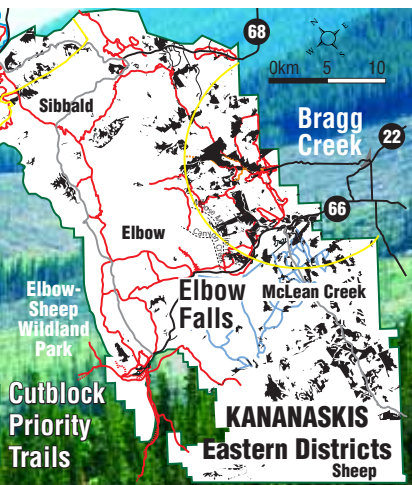
Kananaskis, in particular the eastern districts, should be designated a

protected park (Moose Mountain Park). As a park, the techniques used in the national parks could be used to combat the pine beetle.

Parks Canada policy directs that native insects and diseases are natural ecological processes that should be allowed to proceed without interference if possible. However, the concerns of adjacent land managers must be considered, and where insects or disease pose a serious threat to provincial lands, intervention may occur.

The eastern slopes and foothills of the Rockies includes the Sheep, Elbow and Sibbald districts. Those areas are the most accessible and the most vulnerable. They are an important recreation and tourism resource, attracting about a million visitors annually.

Sports and recreation equipment sales, outfitters and guides, restaurants, gas stations and gift shops all depend on the popularity of



Kananaskis to support their businesses. Economic interests in Calgary and Bragg Creek, including real estate values, will be negatively affected when there are no trees in the forest.

Further industrial development puts our health and safety at risk.

Albertans express a strong attachment to Kananaskis – they own it, they use it and it provides the water that sustains them. Almost every letter sent in June 2006 said that logging should not occur and that logged land would be a personal loss. How can the government ignore that concern?

There is a lot of science and public opinion to warrant reconsidering further industrial development in Kananaskis, but SRD isn't listening.

Several groups, known as the landowners, have formed along the foothills south of Calgary including the Pekisko, Livingstone and

Porcupine associations. They want to protect agricultural rangeland and the environment. They are concerned about gas exploration and development. Their "Southern Foothills Study" reveals the ecological impact of industrial, recreational and residential development on the "natural capital" of the region.



Brad Stelfox is conducting the study. He says the current rate of growth is unsustainable.

Unlike B.C. and other jurisdictions, Alberta has no "Land Use" plan. Kananaskis is managed as a multi-use area. This policy doesn't work as the interests of the various users are at odds. One alternative would separate the interests into regional distributions across the province.

In the Crowsnest Pass, groups advocate for creation of a park and preservation of environmental and social values in the face of extensive logging and gas extraction.

The CROWPAC advisory committee for the C5 Forest Management Plan

have identified the same concerns as we have for Kananaskis, that is, that long-term logging plans are being approved when environmental, economic and social impacts are not being addressed.

WATER AND LAND

About half of Calgary's water comes from the Elbow River watershed.

Impact of clear-cutting on Calgary's water supply:

Following clear-cuts, nutrients and soil wash into water bodies.

- ◆ high nutrients increase risk of algal blooms (Glenmore Reservoir)
- ◆ siltation complicates downstream treatment of water.
- ◆ following clear-cuts, runoff from rainstorms quickly enters rivers.
- ◆ the cost of filtration could outweigh the revenue from logging
- ◆ increases the likelihood of downstream flooding

New York city and Vancouver were able to ensure the quality and quantity of their water while gaining significant cost reduction by investing in the preservation of their watersheds.

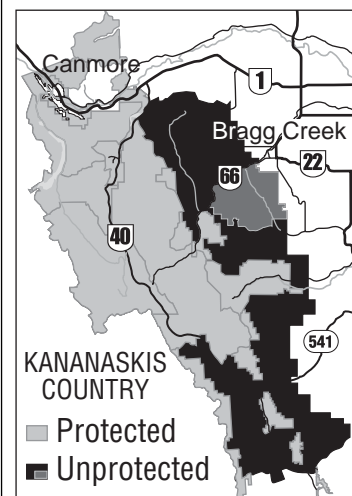
The provincial "Water For Life" strategy identified a serious concern over our water supply. CROWPAC is concerned that extensive logging, with its uncertain to negative impacts on water supply, is being approved by SRD

while a moratorium has been placed on new water licenses.

A number of groups have formed to advocate for environmental issues in the face of an apparent lack of concern by government and unbridled industrial development. The Natural Capital Association and the Alberta Environmental Stewardship Coalition assign value to nature and then use that value to calculate things like the cost of resource development. They are forming a coalition to encourage government to recognize that a majority of Albertans place a high value on our "natural heritage".

Forty-two percent of Kananaskis is not protected. It is an industrial development zone.

There are about 100 gas wells and 70 km of pipeline in the Elbow Valley. Toxic chemicals spew out of flare stacks. Poisonous sour gas flows through pipelines beside recreational trails.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

1 Stay informed. Come to the Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition meeting at the Bragg Creek Centre, 24 White Ave., March 29, 7:30 P.M.

Hundreds of Albertans wrote letters of concern, often passionate, to Spray Lakes Sawmills and Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, in June 2006. They said there should be more consultation, no logging and protection for Kananaskis. These quotes are taken from those letters.



There should be a public enquiry into the whole usage of the Kananaskis area.

The area should be re-designated as a protected Wildland Park

Given the pivotal place of the Elbow River watershed in providing water – the essence of life –for many of us in Calgary and given the rich recreational nature of this area that so many of us want to continue to be able to enjoy in its pristine condition, I would urge you to consider protecting this area from any further logging.

All of Kananaskis country should be preserved to maintain the habitat for the wildlife and provide the opportunity for local Albertans to enjoy.

... this is NOT sustainable development.

We will not be alive in one hundred years to see the trees that grow to replace

Get more information and contact info for officials from www.braggcreek.ca/forest

2 Talk to your friends and associates to let them know that Kananaskis isn't a park - yet, and that it is about to be clearcut.

3 Write to Ted Morton, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, by e-mail: foothills.rockyview@assembly.ab.ca, by mail: 420 Legislature Building 10800 97 Avenue Edmonton, Alberta Canada T5K 2B6

Written by Doug Sephton. For the Bragg Creek - Gateway to Kananaskis web site. www.braggcreek.ca



THREE THINGS TO REMEMBER



1. The forests in K-country have a high economic and social value (water purification, recreation, wildlife habitat) when left in an unlogged state.

2. Clearcutting a forest because some of its trees might be attacked by mountain pine beetles is inappropriate. Mountain pine beetles are unlikely to wipe out the lodgepole pine forests of K-country, as the trees that are too small to be attacked by beetles will quickly grow when their larger competitors are removed by beetles. This process is reflected in Waterton National Park, whose pine forests were attacked by mountain pine beetles in the late 1970s. 30 years after the attack, Waterton's forests are now attractive and healthy.

3. Demand the creation of Moose Mountain Park in NE K-country, a place where natural processes (especially fire and insects) will determine natural forest regeneration. This park would protect Calgary's drinking water supply, recreational opportunities, and natural habitat.

Ralph Cartar, President, Bragg Creek Environmental Coalition

the ones they want to cut down today.

Why is it that recent decisions such as limiting the amount of participants in races to 150 in Kananaskis Country to protect wildlife, for example have been made, yet it's ok to go in and wipe out their habitat by clear cutting?

I believe the Province of Alberta made a wise decision in setting K-Country aside as a protected area ... let's keep it that way.

I implore those responsible and/or accountable for land

management of the Kananaskis area to reconsider their perspective on clear-cutting logging in Kananaskis area.

I believe we all have to answer to the future generations for our actions. Serious study of these matters is important.

I understand that forestry is an accepted activity and considered renewable but in such a high use area so close to a large city like Calgary shouldn't the recreation potential take precedence?

This is one of the most-used recreational wilderness areas we have that is close to Calgary and clearcutting in this area would be devastating to thousands of people not to mention the effect on wildlife in the area.

Extensive, irreversible, and unnatural behaviour (i.e. clear-cutting) in what is a relatively small region is inappropriate, and the fact that it threatens a city the size of Calgary is unacceptable.

Is there no other way than clear cutting?

Do we really wish to expand on our global reputation of being terrible stewards of the land? Tourism is important to our economy!

Given its proximity and beauty, not to mention concerns over the impacts to the Elbow River valley's environment and potentially greater flooding problems, I am astounded that such intensive forest harvesting has been approved.

I find it appalling that in the year 2006, with evidence of global warming everywhere, the logging industry could target such a vital area with so much proposed logging!

I believe that land stewardship must be carried out in a context that has other measures of value than the immediate yield of any timber or oil.

