

February 25, 2015

Dear Honourable Premier Clark,

The undersigned conservation organizations and concerned citizens oppose the ongoing inhumane slaughter of wolves by helicopter in the South Selkirk Mountains and the South Peace region. We demand that this killing be immediately halted and that the cost of this slaughter (\$575,000) to BC taxpayers be put towards caribou habitat protection.

Your government's claim that killing wolves will save these caribou populations has no scientific basis as proven by the failure of BC's wolf "reduction" programs, involving the sterilization, killing, trapping and/or poisoning of wolves. For years, these programs have failed to halt the decline in imperiled caribou populations. Killing more wolves will not miraculously save the caribou.

The caribou populations are declining because for decades your government has failed to adequately protect their habitat. In the Selkirk Mountains, the caribou population has crashed because of logging in addition to snowmobilers, heli-skiers and cat-skiers scaring them off their critical winter feeding grounds.

In the South Peace, critical caribou habitat has been destroyed and fragmented by logging, oil and gas development, access roads and coal mines. Recreational users and industrial development can increase wolf populations and their access to caribou, however, studies of wolves in BC and Alberta show that wolves prefer deer to caribou and that the greatest stressor to caribou is human activity. Years of scientific studies have also proven that mountain caribou require large areas of intact wilderness habitat to survive.

We, the undersigned, therefore join our voices with more than 173,400 persons who have signed the #SaveBCWolves petition, and call on the BC government:

- to immediately halt the ongoing inhumane aerial wolf slaughter;
- to develop caribou recovery plans in line with procedures for identifying critical habitat under the federal Species at Risk Act. These plans should include the creation of large intact protected areas in high and low elevation habitat that are off limit to logging, resource extraction and recreational users with buffer zones where minimal industrial or recreational human encroachment is permitted;
- to ensure the recovery plans are implemented through a transparent and open process, including the publication of annual reports compiled by government scientists and peer-reviewed by independent conservation experts;
- to increase the immediate protection of the 18 surviving caribou in the Selkirk Mountains by enforcing all snowmobile closures recommended by government scientists, excluding overlapping heli- and cat-ski tenures from protected caribou habitat and its buffer zones and prosecuting trespassers. Ongoing Snowmobile Management Agreements negotiations with snowmobile clubs should be open to public review and comment.

Sincerely,

See List of Signators

CC.

Honorable Mary Polak, M.L.A., Minister of Environment, ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca Tel: 250-387-1187

Honorable Steve Thomson, M.L.A., Minister of Forestry, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca Tel: 250-387-6240

Honorable Bill Bennett, M.L.A., Minister of Energy and Mines MEM.Minister@gov.bc.ca Tel: 250-387-5896

Sixty-One Signators to Open Letter to Premier Clark

Canadian Non-Profit Organizations (5)

Animal Alliance of Canada, Ont'90
Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, Ont
Bear With Us Sanctuary, Mike McIntosh, Ont'92
Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, Ont'65
Coyote Watch Canada, Ont'08

British Columbia Non-Profit Organizations (16)

Bears Matter, Barb Murray, BC, 2006
Clayoquot Action Society, BC, 2013
Friends of Clayoquot Sound, BC, 1979
Friends of Nemaiah Valley, BC, 2000
Friends Uniting for Nature Society, BC, 2008
Lifeforce Foundation, Peter Hamilton, BC, 1981
Pacific Wild Alliance, BC, 2006
Purcell Alliance for Wilderness, BC
Save the Cedar League, BC
Sierra Club BC, 1975
Silva Forest Foundation, BC, 1992
Standup4Greatbear, Norm Hann, BC
Valhalla Wilderness Society, BC, 1975
Wilderness Committee, BC, 1980
Wolf Awareness Incorporated, BC, 1987
Yellowhead Ecological Association, BC, 1971

USA and International Non- Profit Organizations (11)

Animals Asia, China/UK, 1998
Change for Animals Foundation, UK
Eastern Coyote/Coywolf Research, MA, USA, 2007
IFAW- International Fund for Animal Welfare, ON, 1969
National Wolfwatcher Coalition, MN, USA
North American Wolf Foundation (Wolf Hollow), MA USA, 1988
Pacific Northwest Collective, WA, USA
Predator Defense, OR, USA, 1990
Spectacled Bear Conservation Society-Peru, BC, 2007
Wolf Conservation Centre, NY, 1999
Zoocheck, ON, 1984

Canadian Businesses and Individuals (29)

Aboriginal Journeys Whales and Grizzly Bear Tours, BC
Applied Conservation GIS, Baden Cross, BC
Behavioral & Enviro Solutions, Biologist, Else Poulsen, ON
Bluewater Adventures Ltd., BC
Brian Brett, Poet and Novelist, BC
Charlie Russell, Bear Specialist and Author, AB
Ellie Archer, Wildlife Viewing Guide, BC
Evelyn Kirkcaldy, Wildlife Artist, BC
Dr. Faisal Moola, Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto, ON

Canadian Businesses and Individuals (29) - Cont'd

Great Bear Chalet, BC
Grizzly Bear Ranch, BC
Holly Arntzen, Conservationist, Musician, BC
John E. Marriott Wildlife and Nature Photography, AB
Kootenay Reflections, Jim Lawrence, Photographer, BC
Dr. Lorna Crozier, Professor Emerita, OC, BC
Maple Leaf Adventures, Kevin Smith, BC
Mark Leiren-Young, Author, Journalist and Playwright, BC
Natural Art Images, Brad Hill – Biologist and Wildlife Photographer, BC
Ocean Adventures Charter Co Ltd., BC
Ocean Light II Adventures Ltd., BC
Dr. Patrick Lane, D. Letters, OC, BC
Dr. Paul Paquet, Wildlife Biologist, AB
Remote Passages Marine Excursions, BC
Robert Bateman, Artist, BC
Ross Peterson, Retired Biologist, BC
Steve Williamson Photography, BC
Susan Musgrave, Masset, Haida Gwaii, BC
Sylvia Dolson, B.C. Animal Welfare Advocate, BC
Watershed Sentinel, BC
Wayne P. McCrory, RPBio, BC