

PETITION for a BC PARK ACQUISITION FUND

A provincial fund of \$40 million/year is needed to purchase BC's most endangered ecosystems on private lands to sustain wildlife, clean water, recreation and tourism.

Whereas:

- British Columbia's most endangered ecosystems are often found on privately-owned lands.
- These endangered ecosystems include Coastal Douglas Fir and Dry Maritime forests on BC's southern coast; Ponderosa Pine forests, grasslands, and "pocket desert" in BC's Interior; wetlands and deciduous forests along many of BC's largest river valleys; and many other important habitats.
- These private lands support large concentrations of endangered species, important scenery, clean water, wild salmon habitat, drinking watersheds, the climate, important First Nations cultural and resource sites, and first rate recreational opportunities.
- Endangered private lands are usually located near BC's main population centers, thus making them prime locations for environmental education and nature tourism. As such they are potentially the highest-value additions to BC's world class parks and protected areas system.
- Many of these private lands are under huge threat from logging and real estate developments.
- Private land trusts, while important, are simply unable to raise enough funds fast enough to buy all of BC's endangered private lands before many of them are destroyed.
- A \$40 million per year BC Park Acquisition Fund would amount to only 1/1000th or 0.1% of BC's \$40 *billion* per year provincial budget.
- Studies show that for every \$1 invested by the BC government in our parks system, another \$9 is generated in the provincial economy through tourism revenues.

Therefore, we the undersigned call on the BC government to:

- Establish a dedicated \$40 million per year BC Park Acquisition Fund, raising \$400 million over 10 years, to systematically purchase private lands of high conservation, scenic, cultural, and recreational value from willing sellers to add to BC's parks and protected areas system.

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