



## The Alberta Fish & Game Association

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### **GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO GET RID OF PUBLIC LAND**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

(Edmonton February 18, 2011)... Alberta's largest conservation group, **the Alberta Fish & Game Association (AFGA)**, is dismayed that the provincial government is transferring more than 84,000 acres of public land to municipalities in order to "allow municipalities to make decisions on the land that are best for the local area" and "create opportunities for local municipalities to build stronger communities for tomorrow."

While it is somewhat understandable that a small proportion of lands located immediately adjacent to burgeoning towns and cities are required for growth in that locality, it is not understandable why, for instance, the MD of Taber requires 54,845 acres or why Vulcan County requires 20,000 acres. It is doubtful that either of these locations will be experiencing an amount of growth that will require such additional lands. This rings especially true when it is considered that Ft. McMurray only received 980 acres for its exponential growth. The AFGA wonders if the fact that the recent "Potatogate" incident near Taber where the provincial government was planning to sell vast tracts of land to SLM Spudfarms, which was not completed, had anything to do with these transfers.

"We have continually urged the Alberta Government to stop selling public lands so it appears that now they are being transferred," said **AFGA President Quentin Bochar**. "Regardless of what you call it, the bottom line is still that the public land base is diminishing," he continued.

The AFGA has had a long-standing policy that does **not** support the elimination of **any** publicly owned lands by whatever means, especially in light of the fact that the populated areas of the province, classified by the Alberta Government as "white areas", contain very limited amounts of publicly-owned land.

These islands of nature often stand out as wonderful fish and wildlife habitats which provide all Albertans opportunities for hunting, fishing, berry-picking, wildlife viewing, or other recreational activities.

**The AFGA, again unanimously calls for an immediate and permanent stop of the depletion of all publicly-owned land in Alberta.**

The Alberta Fish and Game Association is a not-for-profit volunteer organization proud to serve Albertans in the promotion of the wise use of our fish and wildlife resources and the conservation of their habitats. The AFGA has been active since 1908 in working towards these goals and has a province-wide membership of more than 20,500 individuals spread among 100+ Clubs.