



The Alberta Fish & Game Association

6924 – 104 Street
Edmonton, AB T6H 2L7

Phone: (780) 437-2342 Fax: (780) 438-6872
email: office@afga.org website: www.afga.org

GOVERNMENT TRYING TO SELL VALUABLE HABITAT!

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Edmonton September 1, 2011)... Alberta's largest conservation group, the **Alberta Fish & Game Association (AFGA)**, has learned that the **Government of Alberta** is in the process of selling a major tract of public land worth millions of dollars in a highly sensitive ecological region in southern Alberta.

This area is critical to the survival of a number of species at risk that inhabit the area such as the burrowing owl and ferruginous hawk among others. There is less than 5% of native prairie grassland region left and this further destruction will help to seal the fate of these species as well as any outdoors enjoyment by future generations.

Further, the bio-diversity in the area is irreplaceable. Once irrigation is introduced which in the words of SRD Minister Mel Knight is a must for any value added agricultural project, this biodiversity shrinks to a low level.

“Once again, in spite of repeated calls by AFGA to have public input, this decision to sell land was arbitrarily announced. This seems to fly in direct opposition to the government's own Land Use Framework,” said **AFGA President Conrad Fennema**. “I encourage every concerned Albertan to contact their MLA and let their feelings be known,” he continued. Party leadership candidates should also be contacted and asked about their stand on this sale.

Further, the sale is also being touted as providing the ability, by way of the money it will bring in, to purchase higher value conservation lands as well as conservation easements on private and leased land. This doesn't seem to make much sense as the remaining grassland region of Alberta that is in its natural state is already at a minimum and as such it baffles the mind where other higher value lands could be found. It should also be noted that conservation easements look good on paper but are often difficult and expensive to monitor.

It is government's responsibility to steward the land for all Albertans; an action that does not involve selling it. This sentiment has been expressed by Albertans on a continuous basis.

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

“When does No mean No!”

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 and has a long-standing policy that does **not** support the sale of **any** publicly owned lands.

We have been active since 1908 in working towards these goals and have a province-wide membership of more than 20,500 individuals spread among 100+ Clubs.

MLA contact information can be found at:

http://www.assembly.ab.ca/net/index.aspx?p=mla_home or go to the AFGA website www.afga.org and follow the links

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**CONTACT: Conrad Fennema, President, (780) 951-7063
Martin Sharren, Executive Vice President, (780) 437-2342**