



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ALBERTA

Dr. David Swann, MLA

Calgary-Mountain View Constituency

May 19, 2017

Hon. Oneil Carlier
Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
229 Legislature Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Carlier:

Yesterday in Question Period, I asked you about logging in the Kananaskis Country, and, in particular, the Highwood House region. However, your responses did not address the specific concerns I raised.

Residents from Black Diamond, Turner Valley and High River are alleging that the allocation of trees was supposed to be for a period of five years, yet it appears the plan is to take the entire quota this year. The feeling is that this is being pushed through before your government can amend logging plans or put additional conservation measures in place. The operation slated to start in August before concerned citizens can speak up to protect the local economy, the watersheds and the wildlife.

Is this what is happening, and, if so, what are you doing about it?

Residents are also concerned the area to be clear cut is part of a quota operated by Balcaen Consolidated Contracting – a company from British Columbia. And, the timber will be processed at Canfor's Elko Mill in B.C. This means there are very few jobs for Albertans in this plan to clear cut Kananaskis Country. To make matters worse, the clear cutting may actually reduce existing economic opportunities by having a negative effect on livelihoods that are based on the region's intact forests.

What is your ministry doing to protect jobs and support economic diversification in the region?

Finally, conservation groups point out that the creeks in the forested slopes around Highwood House in the upper Highwood River contain pure strain cutthroat trout, which are endangered in Alberta. This activity further threatens their recovery. High River also depends on the forest for flood mitigation.

Will you suspend the quota and order impact assessment before allowing this plan proceed?

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If you could provide me with answers to these question as soon as possible, it would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Swann". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being more prominent and the last name "Swann" written in a more continuous, flowing style.

David Swann, MLA Calgary-Mountain View
Leader, Alberta Liberal Opposition

cc: Honourable Shannon Phillips, Minister of Environment and Parks