



Livingstone Landowners' Group

P.O. Box 148
Cowley, Alberta T0K 0P0

28 March 2018

Media Release

Draft recreation and footprint plans for the Porcupine Hills and Livingstone areas

The Livingstone Landowners' include ranchers, farmers, acreage-owners, small business operators and others who work hard to be good stewards of the upper Oldman River drainage. We work together to protect the interests of the many rural landholders whose efforts keep the world-class landscape on both sides of Alberta's Cowboy Trail — Highway 22 — teeming with wildlife and rich in scenic beauty.

Along with other Alberta landowner groups, conservation groups and individuals, the LLG signed a communique to the Alberta government in 2016 calling for more responsible management of the public lands that lie upstream from, and often immediately adjacent to, our members' private holdings. This position aligns closely with **values held widely by citizens and local governments** in our region as reflected consistently in public opinion surveys over the past quarter century (summary attached).

We congratulate and thank the Alberta government for responding to these concerns in a truly meaningful way. The new draft Recreation Plan and Footprint Management Plan for the Livingstone and Porcupine Hills areas, in our view, will significantly reduce damage and renew the proud stewardship traditions that our public lands and streams deserve.

These plans are **fair and balanced**. The planning team consulted all interested stakeholder groups including off-highway vehicle users, grazing disposition holders, hunters and anglers, forestry companies, First Nations, hikers and others. Not everyone got everything they wanted but everybody was treated fairly. The plans make provision for all uses to continue — in ways that respect the needs of land, streams, fish, wildlife and other users. However, considering that some of the most serious landscape damage in our area has been caused by off-road motorized vehicle use and random camping along the edges of rivers and streams, we feel that the plans do not go far enough in restricting these activities.

The plans are based on **solid science** and responsible analysis. They respect our **best Alberta traditions** of responsible use and mutual respect.

The rural community in our area has always been committed to careful stewardship of land and water. Native wildlife considered at risk elsewhere — species like ferruginous hawk, long-billed curlew, badger and grizzly bear — thrives in many parts of our area. Private property owners have worked with land trusts to permanently protect the conservation values of over 60,000 acres of private land in the region. This represents over \$100 million in land value in which the province has invested approximately

\$17 million. Many of our members also work with organizations like Cows and Fish to restore and protect riparian health.

In our view, the new plans will bring management of public lands in our area back up to a standard that reflects the care our members show to our private lands. The benefits will flow downstream to the thousands of Albertans who rely on this landscape for municipal and irrigation water and who resort to the Porcupine Hills and Livingstone area in search of the finest of outdoor recreation. This area deserves nothing less than the best. **Alberta can take pride in a job well done.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Trafford', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bill Trafford, President
Livingstone Landowners' Group

<http://www.livingstonelandowners.net/>

1 Attachment: Summary of Recent Reports on Community and General Public Views Relevant to Land Use Planning in the Porcupine Hills