

April 22, 2021

An Open Letter To:

Hon. Katrine Conroy, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development

Hon. Nathan Cullen, Minister of State for Lands and Natural Resource Operations

Hon. George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

Hon. Kelly Greene, Parliamentary Secretary for Environment

Hon. Melanie Mark, Minister of Tourism, Arts, Culture, & Sport

Hon. John Horgan, Premier of BC

Brittney Anderson MLA, Nelson-Creston

Re: Support to include the Argenta-Johnson's Landing Face in the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Provincial Park

The Northwest Wilderness Society of the Unitarian Church (NWS) supports of the proposal for the expansion of the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Provincial Park (PWCPP) to include the Argenta-Johnson's Landing (AJL) Face.

We have, since its inception, strongly supported the WilletWildernessForever.ca campaign. We strongly urge you to support their proposal and complete the conservation project of the Conservancy.

We are a non-profit society that owns and operates a wilderness camp at Fry Creek on Kootenay Lake just a few kilometers from where the AJL borders the Conservancy at the shoreline. The mission of the NWS is to protect and steward this area of the Fry Creek delta and adjacent lands and facilitate enjoyment in this wilderness setting.

Our small parcel of land includes Kootenay Lake shoreline at the outflow of Fry Creek near Johnson's Landing, and backs on to the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Provincial Park. The importance and impact of this large wilderness on Kootenay Lake is immense. It is crucial to human experience of wild nature. It is essential to the character of this region of the province as natural, wild and beautiful. It is truly to be valued, and will be increasingly valued in the years to come.

One of our founders, the late Rev. Phillip Hewitt, long-time minister of the Unitarian Church of Vancouver, worked hard for the creation of the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy Provincial Park which is now the largest intact, protected ecosystem in south eastern BC.

The mountainside between Johnson's Landing and Argenta is almost entirely pristine, and it should have been included in the Conservancy when it was created. Now it is threatened by logging this year, which would destroy the possibility of completing this important conservation project.

On behalf of our hundreds of society members and campers who treasure the wild nature of the north-end of Kootenay Lake, we entreaty you to complete this conservation project and add this entire slope to the Conservancy.

Please inform us of your position and actions on this urgent conservation issue.

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