

De : Dwight Knapik <address removed>

Envoyé : 22 octobre 2008 06:01

À : comments@suffieldreview.ca

Objet : Please Protect Canada's National Wildlife Areas Against Further Oil/Gas Development

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to you regarding EnCana's proposal to drill over 1200 more gas wells in the federally protected Suffield National Wildlife Area, near Medicine Hat, Alberta.

I am someone who grew up on the prairies of southeastern Alberta, not too far away from the Suffield area, and the prairies are very near and dear to my heart. Over the years I have had many wonderful experiences on the prairies, and would not trade them for anything. Unfortunately, over the years, I have seen many patches of native prairie disappear forever, whether they be under the plow, or for a variety of other human developments. Native prairie habitat is Canada's most endangered ecosystem and as a country we have protected precious little of it for future generations of humans or plants and animals.

The Suffield National Wildlife Area is a wonderful example of the prairie grassland ecosystem, and the federal government has had the foresight to declare it a protected area for the many threatened and endangered species living there. It is the largest single block of this type of habitat left anywhere in Canada. It gives the native animals and plants that need that habitat to survive a chance to go on living their lives in a way that they have adapted to doing for thousands and thousands of years.

Unfortunately, EnCana has put forth a proposal to drill more than 1200 more gas wells in this area, on top of the many wells, roads, and pipelines that they already have there. They say that there will be no further significant effects on the area with this new proposal.

I say how can there not be further effects with a proposal to drill that many more wells? They say that they will not significantly increase the road systems, but will drive over the prairies instead to get to their wells. How can that not detrimentally affect the habitat, especially in wet conditions? More wells equal more development, more people, vehicles and infrastructure on the land. It also equals an increased demand for water, in an ecosystem where every drop of water is precious for the plants and animals there.

I believe that the relatively short-term benefits of increased gas extraction and the financial gains that accompany it in no way outweigh the benefits of having a precious natural resource that both humans and non-humans alike can share for centuries to come. I hope that we will not significantly destroy the legacy of having a federally protected area for prairie grasslands by allowing further development there. After all, if we can't protect our natural heritage in National Wildlife Areas, where will they be protected?

Please turn down EnCana's proposal to drill more gas wells on the Suffield National

Wildlife Area.

Thank you very much for your time and attention to this important matter.

Sincerely yours,

Dwight P. Knapik
<address removed>