



**“Revolution sometimes happens because everyone refuses to go home.”**

**Judith Butler**

**March 2017**

## Stewards of the Castle

**SAGE Meeting**, March 29th, 7 p.m. at the Lethbridge Public Library.

SAGE will be accepting membership fees for 2017 at AGM (date and location TBA)

**Important:** Take the online [survey](#) for the Castle Provincial & Wildland Park. For more information, visit the government website at [www.albertaparks.ca/](http://www.albertaparks.ca/)

**Lethbridge Sustainable Living Association** planning for Applefest (and other summertime activities). For more information visit their website at:

[www.lethbridgesustainableliving.org](http://www.lethbridgesustainableliving.org)

News release (Feb. 11, 2017):

On Saturday morning in Lethbridge, a group of scientists, local residents, conservationists, authors and recreationists told the story of 50 years of stewardship for the Castle Wilderness. The people of Alberta support the Castle Parks.

Sid Marty, writer and former National Parks Warden:

“The process that led to the Castle Parks getting protected all began with the pressure that Albertans put on the previous government, when the public cried out over the widespread destruction on our Eastern Slopes. Trying to create multi-use trails defies the laws of physics – it’s impossible to have a backpacker and an ATV user try to occupy the same trail. I’m looking forward to actually going for a hike in the Castle wildlands for the first time in two decades.”

David Sheppard, Castle-Crown Wilderness Coalition:

“Motorized recreation has no place in our parks and conservation areas, and Albertans love the outdoors. A Praxis survey showed that eighty-eight percent of Albertans’ said they want more

wilderness protected, and that 86 percent prioritize non-motorized recreation, with many saying that OHV use interferes with their ability to enjoy wildlife and the quiet of the outdoors. This is supported by a Lethbridge public opinion survey, where an overwhelming majority of residents (94%) supported protecting the Castle watershed.”

Andrea Hlady, local resident, Beaver Mines:

“I support the parks because I believe they will become a place for everyone to enjoy. My priority is the safety of my children and I currently feel threatened when I go to the Castle, because it’s loud, uncontrolled and unpredictable.”

Connie Simmons, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative:

“The Castle provides clean drinking water for Lethbridge. Creating the Castle Parks will protect that water, and other wildland values for generations to come. This is what local residents have been asking for. We all want to see our water and wildlife protected from unnecessary damage.”

Dave Hockey, Great Divide Trail Association:

“We support the Government of Alberta’s decision to create both the Castle Provincial Park and the Castle Wildland Provincial Park, including the difficult decision to phase out OHVs. We believe the science based decision is the right one to protect this special area for the majority of Albertans. We also believe it is incumbent upon the Government to provide a designated trail system and the appropriate infrastructure for OHVs in areas that can support this type of use.”

Dave Mayhood, Aquatic Ecologist:

“Alberta’s Eastern Slopes are covered by a network of roads, trails, seismic lines, pipelines, transmission lines and other linear disturbances to a density that is among the highest in western North America. Most of this network is used by off-highway recreational vehicles. These linear features have been shown to be highly damaging ecologically, causing serious problems for vegetation, water quality, wildlife, and fish. We need to drastically reduce this network to protect watershed values and native species. It

## Stewards (cont'd)

would be unconscionable to permit OHVs and their trails in the Castle parks, which hold some 200 rare and at-risk species, and are the most valuable as-yet unprotected lands we have in the province."

Kevin Van Tighem, Alberta Biologist and Author of *Heart Waters: Sources of the Bow River*:

"Nothing is as important to prairie Canada as its water supply. The Castle yields almost a third of the water that Lethbridge and its surrounding irrigation country rely on. And science shows that soil compaction, vegetation loss and erosion caused by off-road vehicles is already reducing our water security."

Van Tighem served on the government's advisory committee that included both scientists and representatives of a wide range of land users in the Castle:

"The government did an exceptional job of listening carefully to the full range of Albertans with a stake in the Castle, including off-roaders. I'm impressed that they chose to make tough decisions supported by the best science available, like phasing out motorized activity. All the science evidence we could find showed that OHV use simply isn't compatible with nature, streams, water security or other park users and that better trail engineering isn't a solution."

Joanna Skrajny, Alberta Wilderness Association:

"In addition to the many logical, material reasons to fully protect the Castle there also are powerful spiritual reasons. The Castle is a sacred place. First Nations have used the Castle Wilderness for at least 10,000 years while use by the direct

ancestors of the present Piikani and Kutenai Nations can be traced back at least 2,000 years. I would argue that the spiritual character of these lands counted when they were included into the National Parks system over 100 years ago. I would like to think this character made the protection of these lands possible today. Knowing that fully protecting the Castle will create a quiet refuge for us to enjoy, will help to restore species at risk, will secure safe water for the residents of southern Alberta, and will provide a magnificent natural legacy for our children sustains the conclusion that protecting wilderness areas is vital."

### For more information:

- Lorne Fitch 403 283-1245
- Sid Marty 403 339-0530
- Dave Hockey 403 863-1780
- Andrea Hlady 403 875-8442
- Stephen Legault 403 688-2964
- Dave Mayhood 403 283-8865
- James Tweedie 403 701-5168
- Kevin Van Tighem 403 609-3858
- Joanna Skrajny 403 483-4683

## Breaching ORCA

"Albertans have a new organization created to represent their concerns over the future of Alberta's wilderness spaces.

The Outdoor Recreation Council of Alberta (ORCA) was recently formed to represent a broad cross-section of Alberta's outdoor recreation organizations.

The group's creation comes in response to the Alberta Government's rapid movement on wilderness area land-use planning. The government recently announced enhanced protection for the Castle area, and there is speculation that the approach developed for Castle will be applied across Alberta. The government is consulting with Albertans on what they would like to see, which is why ORCA was formed."

[outdoorrecreationcouncilofalberta.org/](http://outdoorrecreationcouncilofalberta.org/)

The full news release is attached at the end of this Newsletter.



## Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE)

A Leading Voice for a Healthy and Environmentally Sustainable Community.

Visit us at: <http://sage-environment.org/>

If you are interesting in getting involved, contact us at:

[sage-communications@sage-environment.org](mailto:sage-communications@sage-environment.org)



## Moral Tribes: Emotion, reason, and the gap between Us and Them.



*Moral Tribes* was written by Joshua Greene, an experimental psychologist, neuroscientist, and philosopher focusing on moral judgment and decision-making, primarily using behavioral experiments and functional neuroimaging.

He explores in this book some of his research, mainly using the 'trolley car' scenario. This is a classic psychological experiment where a person standing on a bridge over trolley tracks sees a runaway trolley car rolling towards five people crossing the tracks ahead. The five people will surely be killed unless the person were to push a nearby stranger wearing a heavy backpack off of the bridge and onto the tracks thus stopping the trolley car (but killing back-pack person). Most people will not push the person off of the bridge to their death, even to save five others.

There are many variations of this scenario including one where there is a split track ahead. The person on the bridge can push a button to change the path of the trolley car from killing the five. Unfortunately the track onto which the trolley was diverted had a single person who will be killed. Most people will push the button. The psychological question is why push the button killing one instead of five, but not push the person off the bridge to save five.

Greene concludes that we have a moral aversion to direct violence, controlled by what he calls the 'automatic brain', but the button has a more abstract causality which requires the 'manual brain'. The automatic brain is tribal; the manual brain is utilitarian. The automatic brain defers to 'tribal instinct' that supports group cohesion; whereas the manual brain supports cohesion between groups and must be based on evidence. This is very similar to 'fast' and 'slow' thinking as presented by Daniel Kahneman, recipient of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economics.

Of course, this is all very interesting and

may be enough on its own to inspire you to run out and buy the book - but there is more.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the book was how Greene related these psychological insights into moral problems today, including climate change. The main insight is the importance of automatic thinking for group cooperation and cohesiveness. But it is exactly this group cohesiveness that discourages manual thinking. Greene cites research by Dan Kahan on cultural cognition: "What you, as a single ordinary citizen, think about climate change is very unlikely to have an effect on the earth's climate. But what you think about climate change is rather likely to have an effect on how you get along with the people around you. ... Thus, says Kahan, many people's skepticism about climate change is actually quite rational if you view those people as not trying to manage the earth's physical environment but trying to manage their own social environments" (p.92). Furthermore, "Kahan's prediction, by contrast, is that one's views on climate change have more to do with one's cultural outlook – one's tribal allegiances – than with one's scientific literacy and numeracy. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, Kahan's theory predicts that people who are more scientifically literate, rather than gravitating toward the truth, will simply be more adept at defending their tribe's positions, whatever it happens to be."

Other interesting research shows that people with progressive leanings will accept far-right policies if presented by other progressives; similarly, conservatives will accept far-left policies if presented by other conservatives. Tellingly, most subjects denied being influenced by partisan bias. The conclusion? People will rationalize their automatic responses influenced by tribal belonging. Furthermore, "false beliefs, once they've become

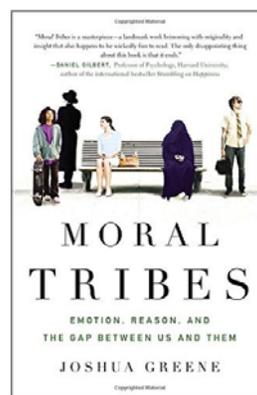
culturally entrenched – once they've become tribal badges of honor – are very difficult to change, and changing them is no longer simply a matter of educating people" (p.94).

In addition to these interesting perspectives, Greene shares some other psychological research relevant to climate change. "In a brilliant set of experiments, Philip Fernbach, Todd Rogers, Craig Fox, and Steven Sloman applied this idea to politics. They asked Americans to consider six controversial policy proposals, such as a single-payer healthcare system and the cap-and-trade system for reducing carbon emissions. In one version of the experiment, they asked people to offer their opinions about these policies and to indicate how well they understood them. They then asked people to explain in detail how these policies are supposed to work. Finally, they asked people to once again, offer their opinions and rate their understanding. They found that people, after being forced to explain the mechanics of these policies, downgraded their estimates of their own understanding and became more moderate in their opinions. The experimenters ran a control version

of this experiment in which people instead of explaining how the policies are supposed to work, offered reasons for their opinions. For most people, offering reasons left their strong opinions intact. What these studies elegantly demonstrate, then, is that the right kind of manual-mode thinking can bring us closer together. Simply forcing people to justify their opinions with explicit reasons does very little to make

people more reasonable, and may even do the opposite. But forcing people to confront their ignorance of essential facts does make people more moderate" (p.297).

Greene, therefore, suggests that though the automatic brain is very important for



## Moral Tribes (continued ...)

group cohesion, it is an impediment to making decisions that involve abstract problems like climate change, particularly when there is some psychological distance between the action and the result (like pushing the button to switch tracks for the trolley car). He says: "In the face of conflict, shift into manual mode" (p.296). The difficulty is in enticing people to switch brains. Having people try to explain their understanding of a complex problem is interesting at face value, but it is difficult to imagine a situation where people would be inclined to agree to do this (outside of a laboratory experiment).

*Moral Tribes* is an interesting book and worth the read. If you are interested in the topic two complementary books that Greene refers to include Jonathan Haight's *The Righteous Mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion*, which explores the same topic from the perspective of political and religious leanings, and Daniel Kahneman's *Thinking, Fast and Slow*.

The topic is timely, as it seems doubtful that effective progress will be made on issues like climate change until the 'moral tribes' are able to talk to each other by turning their brains on to the manual setting.

## PBS Documentary on Rachel Carson

The documentary profiling Rachel Carson is an intimate portrait of the woman whose groundbreaking books revolutionized our relationship to the natural world. When *Silent Spring* was published in September 1962 it became an instant bestseller and would go on to spark dramatic changes in the way the government regulated pesticides.



<http://www.pbs.org/video/2365935530/>

## Retail Shopping Bag Observations in Alberta:

On behalf of *Recycling Council of Alberta* in collaboration with the *Retail Council of Canada*:

Please take note of the following things next time you are at a retailer (grocery store, drug store, clothing store, etc.): Name of store; Location (city/town); Are there signs asking if you remembered your reusable shopping bags? Are there reusable bags on display for sale (store entrance, checkout, other)? At checkout, are you asked if you need a bag? Does the store charge for regular shopping bags? Is there a discount for bringing your own bags? How much of a discount? Is there a choice to donate the discount? Any other information you feel is relevant.

Submit your observations using the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YVBP9NC>  
Feel free to submit several responses on different retailers (one response per store).

## Interesting Links:

Why Are we Feeding Skittles to Cows?

<http://www.mnn.com/food/healthy-eating/blogs/why-are-we-feeding-cows-skittles>

An Inconvenient Truth – sequel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2unzHvFPtY0>

Stickers on Fruit

<http://www.mnn.com/green-tech/research-innovations/blogs/brilliant-idea-get-rid-produce-stickers>

Extracted Carbon: Re-examining Canada's Contributions to Climate Change through Fossil Fuel Exports

<https://d3n8a8pro7vmtx.cloudfront.net/parklandinstitute/pages/441/attachments/original/1485380286/extractedcarbon.pdf?1485380286>

Why Facts Won't Change Our Minds [Elizabeth Kolbert in *The New Yorker*]

**And, two important Letters to the Editor, published in the Lethbridge Herald ...**

## **Government action in Castle a breath of fresh air**

Over the past few decades, a small group of motorized recreationists have come to assume they have social licence to use off-highway vehicles without restrictions in our headwaters. They don't.

We all pay, for the environmental abuse, for building and repairing OHV trails, and by being excluded from enjoying our Eastern Slopes wildlands in a quiet way. Finally government has taken action to address this misguided notion of entitlement held by a few.

It is a breath of fresh air to see the results of informed, consultative planning for the Castle and for other parts of our Oldman River headwaters that benefits the large majority of southern Albertans, rural and urban.

Cheryl Bradley  
Lethbridge

## **Humans, energy and climate change**

Currently our global way of life is dumping millions of tons of greenhouse gases (GHGs) into our atmosphere and oceans daily. Science has told us that there is an effect, but we are struggling to define the level of impact on the future climate.

Supporters and deniers of significant impact only believe their conclusions. They are not based in convincing data. So if one wants to make a statement, one should start by stating one's belief. This will make conversation easier. Because it is a belief, there is no sense in trying to convert anybody.

There are only three attitude options of the impact of fossil fuels (GHGs) on climate change: yes or no or "do not know." If the answer is no, then life goes on as is and we assume that all GHGs are absorbed by photosynthesis and oceans without harmful effect. End of conversation.

If the answer is yes, then the nature and extent of the corrective action needs to be addressed, because of the impact on oceans (temperature, sea levels, acidity), major weather events, food production and species extinction. The consequences of climate change then dominate all corrective actions:

- Type of energy
- Efficiency of energy use
- Demand of energy
- Cost of energy
- Standard of living

If the answer of the impact of fossil fuels on climate change is "do not know," then the conversation about good and bad data goes on and on. "Do not know" in the absence of serious environmental events will not unite us to take action. However, "do not know" in the presence of serious environmental events may indeed make us feel to take united action, just in case. The personal answer is influenced by the level of risk one is inclined to accept.

Eventually, we have to collectively say yes or no to a significant impact of GHGs on climate change. How are we going to agree on this global issue? Only the science process can give us any confidence in the answer. However, the large number of variables and their nonlinear relationship makes the definition of impact on climate very complex. A definitive answer will require many more data points over time and more computer capacity. This may take decades.

By the time we all agree and the answer is yes, it may be too late to do something about it, because many GHGs linger in the atmosphere for decades. The Paris Agreement of December 2015 was a big step towards "yes."

Klaus Jericho  
Lethbridge



**A leading voice for a healthy and environmentally sustainable community.**

Box 383 Lethbridge AB T1J 3E9

January 29, 2017

To: The Honourable Rachel Notley, Premier of Alberta

Cc: The Honourable Shannon Phillips, Minister of Alberta Environment & Parks  
Ms. Maria Fitzpatrick, MLA  
Mr. Todd Loewen, MLA

From: Braum Barber  
Southern Alberta Group for the Environment

Re: Castle Provincial Park and Castle Wildland Provincial Park

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The Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE) would like to thank you for establishing the boundaries of the Castle Provincial Park and Castle Wildland Provincial Park through Orders in Council announced on January 20, 2017. Furthermore, we would like to express our appreciation that First Nations were consulted and have enthusiastically supported the designation of these parks.

We commend the Government of Alberta for its ongoing commitment to protect the Castle with its unique biological diversity and its importance as a source of water for Lethbridge and other communities in the Oldman River watershed.

We also appreciate the clear language in the Vision and Value statements in the draft *Castle Management Plan*: the commitment to high standards of conservation, the protection of biodiversity including at-risk species, maintaining the integrity of riparian areas and wetlands, and the recognition and respect for the land-use and values of Indigenous peoples. It also prudently recognizes opportunities for growth in tourism and high-quality outdoor recreational uses that will be a social and economic benefit to the region.

SAGE supports the strong position the Government of Alberta has taken on restricting access to off-highway vehicles and better managing how people can enjoy camping and other outdoor experiences. Science-informed indicators of riparian and wetland health, the integrity of critical habitats, and the impact of linear disturbances provide a sound basis for current conservation decisions and future restoration efforts.

Future generations will value the Castle Provincial Park and Castle Wildland Provincial Park. To paraphrase a wise adage: "Nobody has ever wished we had fewer natural areas."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Barber".

Braum Barber  
Executive Director

**From:** Office of the Premier <Premier@gov.ab.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 07, 2017 3:49 PM  
**To:** Braum Barber  
**Subject:** RE: Castle Provincial Parks

Dear Braum,

On behalf of Premier Notley, thank you for your kind words of support for the government's work on Castle Provincial Park and the Castle Wildland Provincial Park. I appreciate you taking the time to write, and I have shared your email with Premier.

Government's next steps are to consult with Albertans on a draft Castle Parks Management Plan and begin public engagement on the development of a Castle region tourism strategy that will help support local jobs and the economy. I encourage you to continue to share SAGE's feedback through the [online survey](#).

Thanks again for writing.

Sincerely,  
Leanne  
Manager, Premier's Correspondence Unit  
Office of the Premier

**From:** Lethbridge East <Lethbridge.East@assembly.ab.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 08, 2017 12:24 PM  
**To:** Braum Barber  
**Subject:** RE: Castle Provincial Parks

Good Afternoon,

Thank you for your letter supporting the *draft* Castle Wilderness Management Plan, I have noted it for the MLA's attention. We appreciate your feedback and we encourage you to also provide this feedback to the Ministry. Public input is being collected via and online survey, by email and by mail. Please visit <https://talkaep.alberta.ca/CastleManagementPlan> for more information.

Thank you again for your letter.

Sincerely,  
**Sherry Hunt**  
*Constituency Manager*



**A leading voice for a healthy and environmentally sustainable community**

Box 383 Lethbridge AB T1J 3E9

February 22, 2017

To: Municipal Planning Committee, Cardston County  
From: Braum Barber, Southern Alberta Group for the Environment  
Re: Development Application No. 002.17

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Please accept this letter regarding the Development Application for land located at NE 1-1-27-W4.

The Southern Alberta Group for the Environment (SAGE) supports the concerns expressed by the Boundary Creek landowners regarding the development of a recreational vehicle park and retreat centre at this location. With the exception of the land-use designation, there appears to be little change in the application since it was previously submitted to the Council of Cardston County.

The parcel under consideration for development is adjacent to Outpost Wetlands Natural Area to the south and Police Outpost Provincial Park to the east - both of which are key components of the provincial protected areas system for the Foothills Parkland Natural Subregion and are within an Environmentally Significant Area of national significance (<https://www.albertaparks.ca/albertaparksca/library/environmentally-significant-areas-report/>). Private ranchland north of Police Outpost Provincial Park is under conservation easement to Nature Conservancy Canada because of its environmental significance. Together these properties support significant biodiversity, including foothills fescue grassland, aspen woodland, and wetland ecosystems that provide habitat for several species of conservation concern including Grizzly Bear, Black-headed Grosbeak, Leopard Frog, Western Blue Flag and Conimitella. The region is also home to the Trumpeter Swan, only recently elevated from a species-at-risk status in Alberta due to the success of the Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development *Trumpeter Swan Recovery Plan* (2013). The plan indicates this region as prime breeding grounds for the Trumpeter Swan – a unique site in the province south of Wetaskiwin (<http://aep.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/wild-species/birds/waterfowl/trumpeter-swan.aspx>). Maintaining current zoning would support ongoing efforts to maintain rich biodiversity and the recovery of this species.

The parcel under consideration for development is at the headwaters of Boundary Creek, a tributary of Lee Creek and source waters for the town of Cardston and other communities downstream in the Oldman watershed. Any use that leads to significant reduction in streamflow in Boundary Creek and/or adulteration of surface or groundwater is of concern. The use of the parcel for livestock grazing is consistent with protecting and providing significant ecological goods and services – biodiversity protection, source water protection, water capture and filtering, carbon capture, and livestock production on native range. Change of zoning and use may result in loss or degradation of these goods and services.

The *South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP)* speaks to “Maintaining an agricultural land base [that] recognizes the value of agricultural land for sustainable growth as well as providing an opportunity for expansion of agricultural production and value-added agribusinesses in the region” (p.44). The document also recognizes the need to find a greater balance between economic, social and environmental aspects in decision making, with a greater emphasis on preserving biodiversity through conservation. The SSRP states that a provincial approach for the management of ecosystem services requires that “new methods and strategies must be explored and developed to encourage the provision of a broad suite of ecosystem services by private landowners” (p.66). The current stewardship practices of local landowners support these provincial goals.

The nearby provincial park provides a level of recreational opportunities that is appropriate for the infrastructure available, and is properly managed by provincial regulations. The addition of 150 RV sites results in a facility that is over three times as large as the camping facilities currently available at Police Outpost Provincial Park. The proposed development will greatly exacerbate traffic and stress existing infrastructure and, as already noted, the additional activity and noise will negatively impact wildlife habitat in the region. Since a private development is largely independent of provincial purview, it becomes more difficult to respond to the negative cumulative effects of development as they emerge. Cumulative effects are, perhaps even more of a concern considering the expectations of leasing the sites on an annual basis.

If the land is rezoned, any approval of commercial/private recreation use would need to be sensitive to the significant “natural attributes, natural aesthetics and important scenic vistas” of the parcel as well as Outpost Wetlands Natural Area and Police Outpost Provincial Park and adjacent private property under conservation easement. Any use would need to limit or avoid compromising these attributes (refer to Schedule 2 Land Use District Regulations for Rural Recreation - RR in Cardston County Land Use Bylaw 653-2013). Careful consideration would need to be given to the source of potable water supply (would the proposed land use require a water licence) and to wastewater management to avoid contamination of surface and groundwater. Other concerns might include deleterious noise from on-site electricity generation.

We support the Boundary Creek Landowners Group that a detailed environmental impact assessment and a comprehensive area structure plan be required for any change in land use that may impact current natural attributes of the land under consideration and surrounding area.

SAGE believes that cumulative effects planning is necessary to conserve the ecosystem services that are a foundation for a healthy society and robust regional economy. Such planning will require support from all levels of government in their decision making, as well as the stewardship of private landowners. The development of a RV park is not supported by the landowners in the region, it is not aligned with conservation goals of the Province of Alberta for biodiversity, and it is not an example of the greater environmental balance acknowledged in the SSRP. Negative cumulative effects on biodiversity, ecosystem services, and the integrity of our headwaters suggest that high-impact developments, such as the one proposed, should be discouraged.

Sincerely,

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

Braum Barber  
SAGE



## Alberta's Outdoor Community Organizes to be Heard.

**Outdoor Recreation Council of Alberta formed to represent broad spectrum of Alberta's outdoor Recreation Community.**

**Media Availability Thurs. Feb. 17, 10:30 a.m. North Glenmore Park**

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Albertans have a new organization created to represent their concerns over the future of Alberta's wilderness spaces. **The Outdoor Recreation Council of Alberta ([ORCA](#))** was recently formed to represent a broad cross-section of Alberta's outdoor recreation organizations.

The group's creation comes in response to the Alberta Government's rapid movement on wilderness area land-use planning. The government recently announced enhanced protection for the Castle area, and there is speculation that the approach developed for Castle will be applied across Alberta. The government is consulting with Albertans on what they would like to see, which is why ORCA was formed.

"To this point, several, very vocal, special interest groups have voiced their concerns," says Albi Sole, Executive Director of the Outdoor Council of Canada, and a volunteer leader with ORCA. "however the largest percentage of the province's outdoor community has been too fragmented to participate in this type of process effectively. If we don't get organized right now we will miss a once in a generation opportunity for our voices to be heard."

ORCA's leadership group is concerned that the Government's [Castle Plan](#) contains almost nothing of substance about outdoor recreation, which Sole says reflects the fact that planners and politicians have not heard what Alberta's outdoor community really wants.

"Designation of an area as a park is only the start," says Sole. "A multitude of decisions will need to be made and it is essential the recreation voice be heard in this process. We have a choice. We can sit back and watch, or we can organize and be heard."

The volunteer leadership of the new umbrella organization - the Outdoor Recreation Council of Alberta (ORCA) - are asking Alberta's outdoor groups to sign up on their website ([www.outdoorrecreationcouncilofalberta.org](http://www.outdoorrecreationcouncilofalberta.org)) to ensure their voice is heard going forward. They're also asking Albertans interested in recreation to become supporters and to spread the word.

**Note there will be a media availability to introduce the organization with Albi Sole and representatives from a variety of Alberta's outdoor recreation groups tomorrow, Thursday, February 16, 2017 at the West end of [North Glenmore Park](#), (37th St. and 66th Ave. S.W.) 10:30am**

**Media Contact:**

Albi Sole

Executive Director

[Outdoor Council of Canada/Conseil canadien de plein air](#)

114 Sienna Ridge Landing SW, Calgary, AB, T2H 3T1.

Ph: 403-710-5799