

Environmental Alert

Boundary Bay Greenbelt Habitat and Farmland Up for Sale

Greenbelt lands that were bought in Delta and Surrey to conserve habitat and farmland in perpetuity are now to be **sold by the B.C. Government**. This **reversal of environmental policy** on the Boundary Bay ecosystem could trigger an environmental disaster of global significance to bird populations on the **Pacific Flyway**.

Greenbelt Lands:

- In 1972 a far-sighted provincial government introduced the Green Belt Protection Fund Act “to **encourage the establishment and preservation in perpetuity**” of Greenbelts.
- In 1974, the B.C. Government purchased key farmlands in Delta and Surrey around Boundary Bay as Greenbelt because of their “**great conservation value.**”
- In 1995, the B.C. Government, in partnership with Environment Canada, the Greater Vancouver Regional District and Delta, purchased another 142 hectares adjacent to Boundary Bay for **\$9.6 million** to “**enhance habitat protection**”.

What is Happening:

- Through the B.C. Assets and Land Corporation, the provincial government is planning to sell Greenbelt lands around Boundary Bay at Fraser Valley prices. Further, buyers will be able to resell in five years for speculative market prices.
- A large area of provincial Crown farmland, that was expropriated in Delta for Superport backup developments in 1967, is being sold without promised covenants for soil-based agriculture and habitat conservation thus succumbing to the greenhouse development lobby.

Consequences:

- Disastrous loss of critical of wildlife habitat in Delta and Surrey
- Conversion from open soil farming to greenhouses on rich delta soils
- Speculation on the last farmland in the Lower Fraser delta
- Collapse in the viability of soil-based farmers around Boundary Bay
- Fragmentation of any remaining habitat

The cumulative impact will threaten the integrity of the Fraser River delta ecosystem and hence endanger the most important stopover in Canada for birds migrating along the Pacific Flyway.

Although 80% of the Fraser delta wetlands have already been lost to development:

- Up to five million birds from twenty countries on three continents depend on this stopover.
- Close to half a million waterfowl and shorebirds winter here moving daily between foreshore marshes and upland farm fields.
- Wintering waterfowl take over 400 tonnes of cover crops planted on farm fields in Delta.
- Research on Dunlin shows that Greenbelt farmlands on Boundary Bay are vital habitat for these wintering shorebirds.

Help protect this globally significant wetland ecosystem from being piecemealed to death!

Please turn over

Urgent!

Please Act Now -- Write, Phone, Fax, or Email:

The Right Hon. Jean Chretien,
Prime Minister of Canada,
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Phone: (613) 992-4211
Fax: (613) 941-6900
Email: Chretien.J@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Glen Clark
Premier of B.C., PO Box 9041
Stn Provincial Government
Victoria, B.C. V8W 9E1
Phone: (250) 387-1715
Fax: (250) 387-0087
Email: glen_clark@bc.sympatico.ca

Please send copies to:

The Hon. Christine Stewart
Minister of Environment
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0A6
Phone: (613) 992-8585
Fax: (613) 995-7536
Email: Stewart.C@parl.gc.ca

The Hon. Cathy McGregor
B.C. Minister of Environment and Parks
Room 337, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4
Phone: (250) 387-1187
Fax: (250) 387-1356

The Hon. Joy McPhail
Minister of Finance
Room 248, Parliament Buildings
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4
Phone: (250) 387-3751
Fax: (250) 387-5594

Ask them to:

1. Impose a moratorium on the sale of upland Greenbelt Lands in Delta and Surrey around Boundary Bay.
2. Transfer all upland Greenbelt Lands in Delta and Surrey to the Boundary Bay Wildlife Management Area.
3. Re-consider the conditions on the sale of the formerly expropriated Roberts Bank Backup Lands in Delta.
4. Declare Roberts Bank a Wildlife Management Area.

For further information contact:

Susan Jones: Phone: (604) 943-6406 Fax: (604) 943-2857 email: susanj@direct.ca
Mary Taitt: Phone: (604) 946-2438 Fax: (604) 946-2438 email: taitt@bc.sympatico.ca

OR: Write the Boundary Bay Conservation Committee (BBCC)
P.O. Box 1251, Delta, B.C. V4M 3T3

Join the Boundary Bay Conservation Committee by becoming a member or supporter:
Membership: Individual: \$10 Family or Organization: \$15
Donations: \$