

June 29, 2001  
Canmore, Alberta

**Public input helps shape Conservation Easement on Three Sisters lands**

Alberta has increased monitoring and enforcement to enable wildlife to move through the Canmore corridor. Following public input, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development has entered into a conservation easement agreement associated with golf course developments proposed by Three Sisters Resorts Inc.

The easement gives the Alberta Government the enforcement capability over activities related to wildlife movement through a section of private property. Public input assisted the department to refine the conservation easement. The easement has now been divided into two documents, specific to each golf course development. Additional details helped broaden the goals of these legal designations. Interested Albertans also expressed concerns about the amount of forest cover in the secondary corridors. The department is committed to ensuring that all golf course development plans make provision for adequate forest cover, consistent with conditions set out by the Natural Resources Conservation Board (NRCB).

In addition to a three-year monitoring program involving a variety of species, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development required that Three Sisters Resorts Inc. submit a monitoring plan for rare plant and long-toed salamander studies.

Mike Cardinal, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development, stated, "I am satisfied that the conservation easements will effectively meet requirements for wildlife movement outlined in the NRCB decision. In addition, the ongoing wildlife monitoring will allow us to ensure that the corridors are functional."

In total, 96 submissions were received by the department during the public input period from May 8 to June 1. An open house, attended by approximately 250 people, was held on May 23 in the town of Canmore to communicate details of the draft conservation easement and associated wildlife and plant monitoring studies. The conservation easement approach is a way to facilitate wildlife movement as required under the conditions of the Natural Resources Conservation Board Decision Report #9103, which approved the Bow Valley portion of the proposed Three Sisters Resort in 1992.

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**Backgrounder  
Conservation Easements for Three Sisters Resorts Inc.**

## Why a Conservation Easement?

A conservation easement is a particularly effective way to legally designate and establish a wildlife corridor on private land.

Through Alberta's *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, the Alberta government is able to obtain and enforce such a conservation easement across private property.

## How did the Alberta government determine the easement area?

In 1992, the Natural Resources Conservation Board issued Decision Report #9103. The report approved the Bow Valley portion of the Three Sisters Resorts development to proceed under certain conditions. A key condition was to consider the movement of wildlife through the Bow Valley.

The wildlife movement system is more than just a line drawn on a map. To facilitate this wildlife movement, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development required that the system consist of four components:

- the designated primary east-west corridor;
- buffer associated with the primary corridor;
- designated secondary corridors; and
- golf course development areas adjacent to the secondary corridors.

The easement includes the designated secondary corridors and the golf course development areas adjacent to the secondary corridors. It also creates buffer zones associated with the primary corridor. The Alberta government also required the company to develop a program to monitor wildlife movement in the primary corridor and the conservation easements. Where warranted, mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure that the designated corridors continue to function as intended.

## How can you get copies of the easement?

Copies of the revised easement can be obtained from the Canmore office of Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. Please phone the office at (403) 678-5508.

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