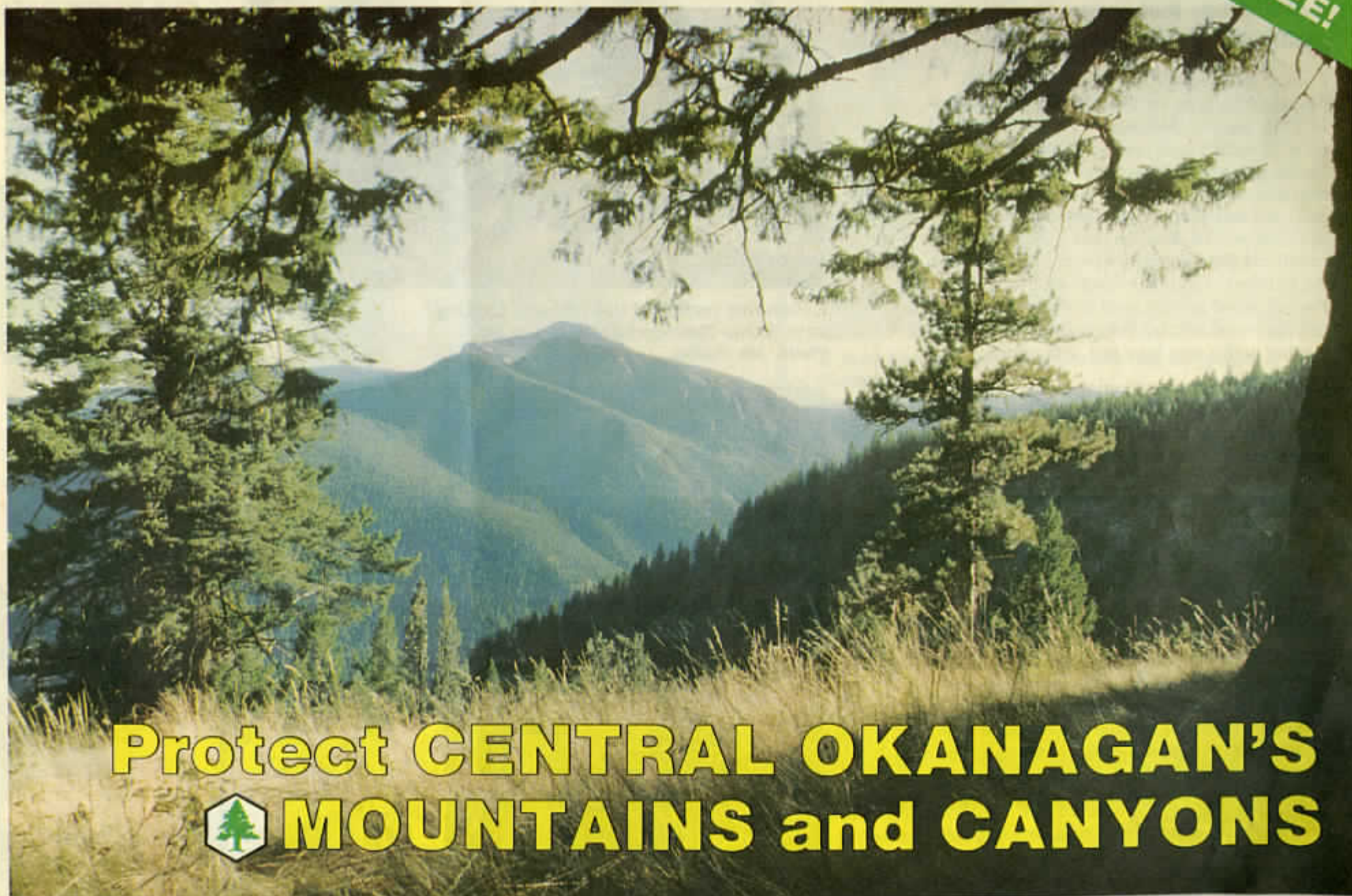


FREE!



Protect CENTRAL OKANAGAN'S MOUNTAINS and CANYONS

Terrace Mountain from the north rim of Shorts Creek Canyon. Rugged Chapperon - Shorts Creek needs protection! Photo: Ian Pooley.

Let's create a 115,000 hectare interconnected wilderness system in the Central Okanagan

Only 2.5% of the Thompson-Okanagan Region of British Columbia is protected in parks. Everyone agrees that this is not enough. The B.C. government's goal is to increase parks and protected areas to 12%. This is still not enough to protect natural biodiversity—all the wild plants and animals that make the Okanagan their home.

Recently the NDP government has created many new parks, totalling more than 4 million hectares. However, none of them are in the Okanagan. Our special region, although it includes 58% of B.C.'s threatened and endangered species, is not getting the protection that it urgently needs.

In the Central Okanagan, the east and west sides of Okanagan Lake are bordered by steep plateau rims cut by large, deep, stunningly beautiful canyon valleys. These canyon valleys need protection from logging, mining, overgrazing and the thoughtless incursions of expanding urbanization. These areas contain the last fragments of a complex ecosystem that will vanish if it is not protected properly with corridors for animals to move from lake level to the high plateau and for plant genes to migrate.

The Central Okanagan Canyon Wilderness System is a small but significant part of the Okanagan/Shuswap Land Resource Management Planning area. It comprises thirteen canyon and creek corridors that drain the Thompson Okanagan Uplands. Six of them are west of Okanagan Lake and ten are on the east side of the lake. In total they make up approximately 115,000 hectares of saveable wilderness which in places comes right up against the backdoor of large urban developments.

All together, this interconnected system contains an amazing diversity of plant and animal life. Habitats range from lowland marshes to alpine meadows.



Myra Canyon. The upper canyon forests reach all the way to Little White Mountain along Pooley Creek. Photo: Ian Pooley.

Ecosystems include low elevation ponderosa pine grasslands, through mid-level slopes of larch and fir, up to higher elevation old spruce and balsam forests.

The Okanagan Canyon Wilderness System contains remnant populations of wolves, grizzly bear,

California Bighorn Sheep, mountain goats, and elk. At mid-elevations the red-listed Okanagan Flameflower (*Talium sedifforme*), a species unique to the Okanagan Valley, can be found. Near the valley floor are scarce undisturbed grasslands, home of some of Canada's rarest wildlife species.

The Okanagan Chapter of the Western Canada Wilderness Committee invites everyone to join the movement to save the Central Okanagan Canyon Wilderness with a protected area system, including connecting corridors, before it is too late.

WCWC HIKING TRAILS ARE HELPING PROTECT THE OKANAGAN CANYON WILDERNESS SYSTEM

WCWC is establishing a north south trail corridor, the Okanagan Highlands Trail, on both sides of Okanagan Lake. This trail corridor, if properly protected, will serve as a vital recreational feature that will help people understand, love and protect the fragile Okanagan ecosystems.

Over 50 km. of this network, including the High Rim section from Vernon to Kelowna and the Grouse Creek section south of Kelowna, is substantially complete and already being used by hikers and amateur naturalists. Many sections of this trail offer spectacular views of the major canyons, including Myra Canyon, Bellevue Canyon, Powers Creek Canyon, and Shorts Creek Canyon. With the help of local volunteers, trail development is currently underway on the Little White Mountain section and the McDougall Rim - Powers Creek section.

McDOUGALL RIM:

a case study that shows continuing the status quo spells disaster.

Plans to save the vestiges of the Okanagan's biological heritage are being constantly thwarted. In 1994, the B.C. Ministry of Forests announced plans to build a road network in the middle of the McDougall Rim-Powers Creek area, effectively chopping in two and fragmenting a proposed protected area that had local government endorsement. To date, the road system has been completed and logging has begun. Requests that the Ministry of Forests consult with local environmental groups, local levels of government, and concerned citizens before going ahead with logging in this area have met with refusal.

Unless a concerned and caring public succeeds in getting provincial park protection for the remaining wilderness areas in the Okanagan, there will be lost battles like McDougall Rim in the years to come.

Save Chapperon-Shorts ...and keep it as an unspoiled natural marvel!

Chapperon-Shorts wilderness area lies to the west of Okanagan Lake. At roughly 20,000 hectares, it is the largest undisturbed area on the west side of the Okanagan Valley. It contains a spectacular deep canyon and old growth forests of Douglas fir, Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir. Chapperon-Shorts wilderness is home for a remnant population of California Bighorn Sheep.

It provides a unique remaining natural corridor from the floor of Okanagan Valley to the high South Thompson Uplands and the grasslands of the Douglas Lake plateau.

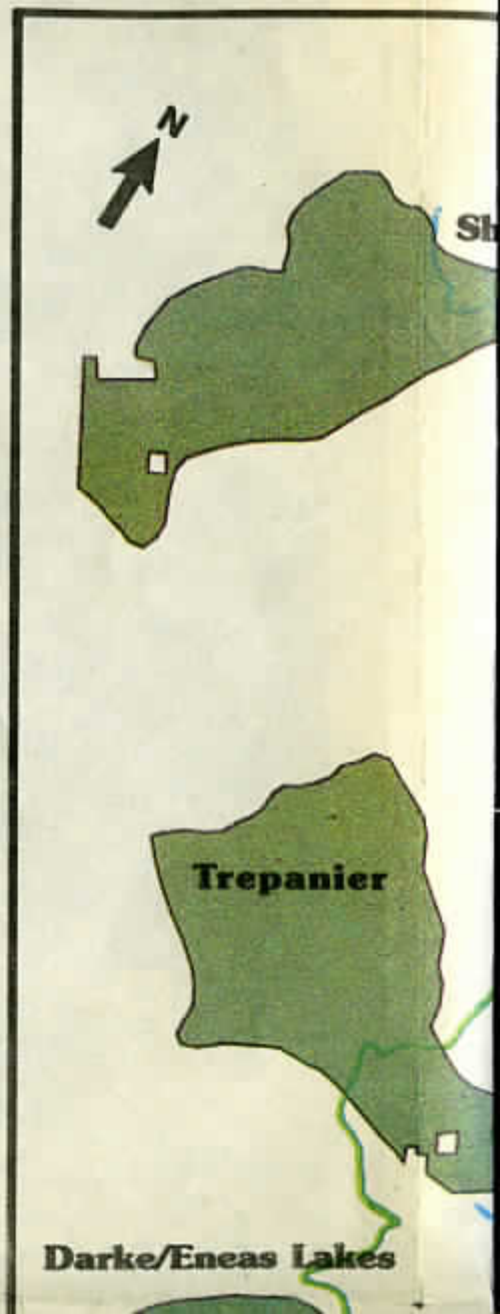
Like every other wilderness area still left in the



1. High Rim section of trail network. Looking west across Okanagan Valley in late fall.
Photo: Ian Pooley.



PROPOSED CENTRAL CANYONS WILDERNESS



2. Bighorn sheep lambing area in Shards Creek Canyon.

Like every other wilderness area still left in the Okanagan, it is threatened by logging on all sides and the threat is growing. The area around Terrace Mountain to the south and the Chapperon and Whiteman Creek drainages to the north have been extensively clearcut, and more logging in the area is in industry's short term plans.

The high hiking trail on the north rim of Shorts Canyon leads to one of the finest mountain and canyon networks in the Valley. Shorts Creek deserves special protection as a natural marvel!



Subalpine meadows and old burn on Little White. The old burn on Little White dates back to the 1930s. *Photo: Ian Pooley.*

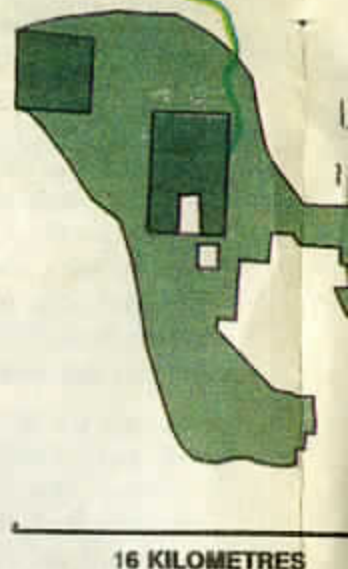
2. Bighorn sheep lambing area in Shorts Creek Canyon. These steep slopes are the last bastion of a declining remnant herd of Bighorn sheep.

Photo: Don Guild.



3. Crawford Lake looking west in Little White area.

Photo Don Guild.



LEGEND

- Existing parks and reserves
- Proposed protected areas, se
- Added areas recommended
- WCWC Okanagan Highlands
- Kettle Valley Railway Right-C

SAVE LITTLE WHITE MOUNTAIN and th

Little White is a mountain in crisis. At an elevation of nearly 2,200 metres, Little White is the only mountain with alpine habitat near Kelowna. Currently, its approximately 20,000 hectares of subalpine forest and alpine meadow are threatened by logging, cattle grazing, and uncontrolled use of ATVs.

The "South Slope" is the forested slope, cut by several large canyons, that extends from the urban boundaries of Kelowna to the summit ridge of Little White. It needs park protection, too.

For such a relatively small area, Little White and its South Slope harbour an amazing amount of

diversity, including extensive old growth Ponderosa pine and Douglas fir at lower elevations, a hot spring at mid elevation, and uniquely beautiful alpine meadows near the summit.

With an elevation gain of nearly 1.4 kilometers from where the outskirts of Kelowna end barely 350 metres above Okanagan Lake, all the way up to the summit, its deep-walled canyons, cliffs, and granite escarpments are unequalled anywhere else in the central Okanagan for their breath-taking beauty. It encompasses grizzly bear, elk and mountain goat habitat.

The Little White Mountain-South Slope wilderness

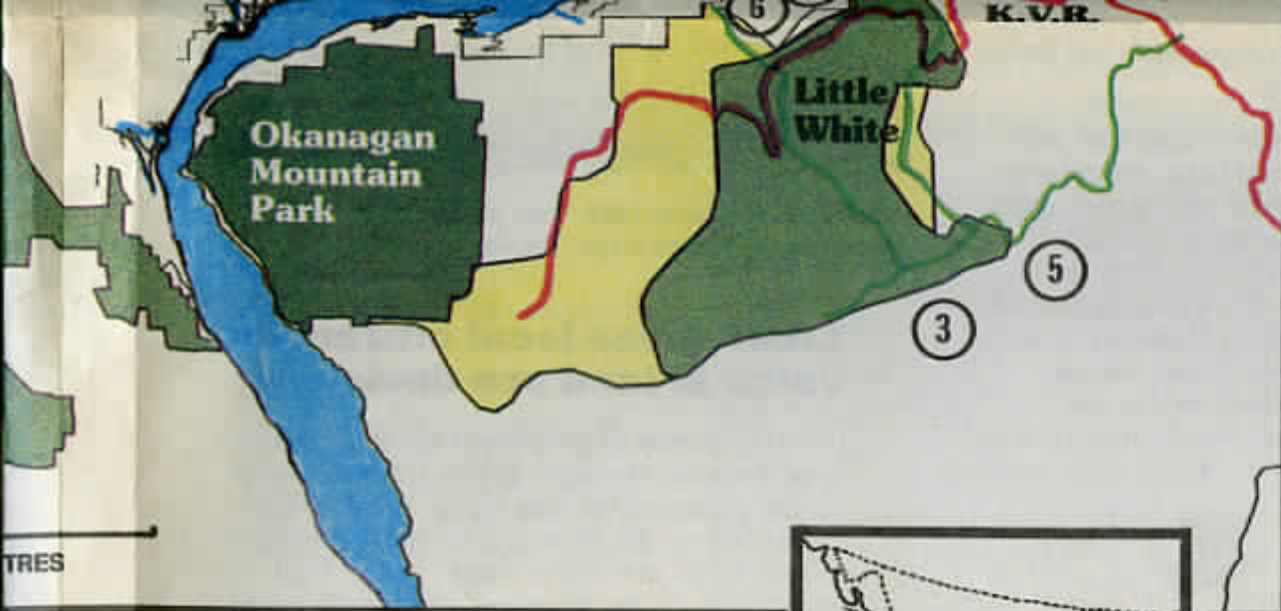
CENTRAL OKANAGAN MOUNTAINS AND WILDERNESS PARK and TRAIL SYSTEM



4. Myra Canyon. The lower canyon has old growth Ponderosa pine.
Photo Ian Pooley.



5. Crawford Lake on Little White. The alpine and subalpine area on Little White is small but uniquely beautiful.
Photo: Don Guild.



TRES

*Central Okanagan Regional District (CORD)

reserves
areas, selected by government habitat biologists
ended by WCWC and supported by CORD*
Highlands Trail and adjacent Canyon Trails
Right-Of-Way (proposed part of Trans-Canada Trail)



the SOUTH SLOPE

is threatened on all sides by relentless clearcut logging. Pine beetle salvage operations and massive clearcuts have already denuded much of the high plateau to the south, east and west. Large logging road networks have isolated it from the mountains to the south and west. It urgently needs protection as a wilderness area park.

The backyard wilderness of Kelowna--Little White--must be treasured and protected, not developed and destroyed. It's an irreplaceable recreational and natural wilderness--a priceless asset--for the largest city in the Okanagan to hold in trust forever.



Photo above right:
6. Bellevue Canyon showing old
growth interior Douglas fir.
Photo Ian Pooley.

7. Bellevue Canyon. The upper
canyon is a deep, narrow gorge.
Photo: Don Guild.



Establish a Brent Mountain Nature Conservancy Area!

Brent Mountain is the last large unspoiled alpine area in the South Okanagan. It needs protection.

In the 1920s, Harry Stock, a camera shop owner from Penticton, carried his heavy camera equipment up Brent Mountain to photograph wild flowers. It is because of Stock's botanical curiosity that rare flowering plant species were discovered there that are found nowhere else in B.C. except in the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Both Brent Mountain and the adjoining Sheep Rock are over 2100 metres high. The alpine areas are very fragile. Parts are now accessible to off-road vehicles and tires are tearing up the fragile vegetation. On the lower slopes, extensive logging has shrunk the extent of wild forest that can still be protected.

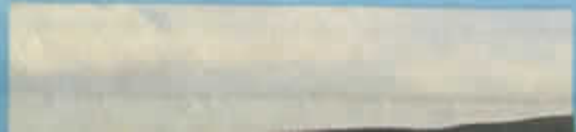
But Brent Mountain still can and must be saved from further logging and more thoughtless exploitation. Giving Brent Mountain special Nature Conservancy status has broad support from Okanagan conservation groups, including the Wilderness Committee (WCWC) who, ten years ago, featured Brent Mountain in its *Western Canada Endangered Wilderness Calendar*.



Subalpine slopes on Brent Mountain. This is the last unspoiled alpine and subalpine area in the South Okanagan. Photo: Bill Johnston, OSPS.

End bad logging practices

An unsustainably high Annual Allowable Cut (AAC) in the Okanagan allows local mills to clearcut on both sides of the valley. Fragile creek corridors and stream beds are frequently damaged in the push to find easily harvestable timber. If the present rate of logging continues, most of the Okanagan's remaining oldgrowth will be cut down within the next 20 years.



White Lake - Vaseux Lake: *an area that must be protected!*

The biologically fragile Vaseux - White Lakes area, located south and west of Okanagan Falls, is a refuge for rare and threatened species. Although Mahoney Lake and Vaseux Lake are presently protected, nearby White Lake is not and is threatened by encroaching urban development.





Poor logging practices! High-lead clearcut logging across Cardinal Creek near the High Rim section of Okanagan Highlands Trail. Photo: Ian Pooley.

nearby White Lake is not and is threatened by encroaching urban development and cattle grazing.

This area of sagebrush and grassland has a rich diversity of habitats with golden eagles, canyon wrens, Western bluebirds, gray flycatchers, flammulated owls, spotted bats, rare desert night snakes, sage thrashers, prairie falcons, long-billed curlews, the Western harvest mouse and the rare white-headed woodpecker.



White Lake - Vaseux Lake. Part of Canada's "pocket desert" in the forest slope. Photo: Don Guild.

LRMP gives local citizens a voice in land use decisions

The B.C. provincial government has established a Land Resource Management Plan (LRMP) process for the Okanagan-Shuswap region. Local interest groups will be able to meet at the negotiating table to help design the kind of a parks system local people want for the Okanagan. The process started in February 1995 and is scheduled to take about two years. WCWC's Okanagan Chapter is actively involved, advocating an ecologically viable wilderness parks system as outlined in this paper.

YES! I want a Central Okanagan Canyons Wilderness Park System!

☐ ☐ I am writing a letter to the Premier of B.C. (Legislative Buildings, Victoria, BC V8V 1X4) informing him where I stand on protecting the entire 115,000 hectare Central Okanagan Wilderness Canyons Park and Trail System...and I have asked him where he stands on this vital issue.

☐ ☐ I am happy to contribute to your campaign to preserve Okanagan Wilderness. Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of \$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 other to help you win this campaign.
WCWC's Federal Registered Charitable Tax Number is 0587113-21-28.



I want to ☐ ☐ renew my WCWC membership ☐ ☐ become a WCWC member. Enclosed is my \$30 membership fee.
☐ ☐ I would like to be a Sustaining-Family member here is \$52 (\$1 per week for wilderness preservation).
☐ ☐ Please upgrade my regular \$30 membership to a Sustaining-Family membership. Enclosed is \$22.

Note: call our toll free 1-800-661-9453 number to donate and become a WCWC member and save time and trees!

Name (please print) _____ Address _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Send to: Western Canada Wilderness Committee (WCWC) - Okanagan Chapter, P.O. Box 25018, Mission Park RPO, Kelowna, B.C. V1W 3Y7.

Credits

Published by Western Canada Wilderness Committee (WCWC), 20 Water Street, Vancouver, BC V6B 1A4. 604-683-8230

WCWC is a non-profit charitable society dedicated to promoting, through research and education, sustainable resource use and wild ecosystems preservation.

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Maps: WCWC-Okanagan Chapter volunteers

Western Canada Wilderness Committee
Educational Report Vol. 15 - No. 8

Spring 1996. Printed in Vancouver.
Canadian Publications Mail Product

Sales Agreement No. 0900563

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A special thanks to all those who have
worked on the WCWC Okanagan study
system and the background information for
the Okanagan Canyon Wilderness System.