



Nova Scotia's Proposed Wilderness Areas in Chignecto Protect Significant Intact Forest Landscapes

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EDMONTON, July 28 2011: The proposed boundaries for the **Kelley River and Raven Head Candidate Wilderness Areas** capture a significant portion of the intact forest landscapes in the Chignecto area, according to a new study released today by Global Forest Watch Canada.

"It is important to protect intact forest landscapes," says lead author Ryan Cheng. "Intact forest landscape are large contiguous mosaics of naturally occurring ecosystems in a forest ecozone that are essentially undisturbed by significant recent human influence. Protecting them is the most efficient way to ensure the long term ecological health of landscapes."

Cheng added, "These candidate areas protect a significant amount of intact forest landscapes for the Chignecto region. But there remains additional adjacent intact forest landscapes that are not included for protection, including a substantial amount on crown land."

The study found that:

- The boundaries of the two candidate wilderness areas capture 54% (11,472 ha) of the intact forest in the vicinity of Chignecto -- a significantly large amount -- and 65% of a potential large intact forest on crown lands -- also a significant amount;
- There are an additional 8,583 ha of intact forest landscapes that remain outside of protected areas in the Chignecto that are not covered by the candidate wilderness areas. Of these intact forest landscapes, 69% of these forests are on crown lands. Left unprotected, these areas are vulnerable to disturbances, such as resource extraction, that reduce their ecological health.
- Chignecto is the only large cluster of intact forest remaining in Nova Scotia that does not yet have a legally-protected wilderness area at its core.

Cheng concludes, "Global Forest Watch Canada is very pleased to provide this study to Nova Scotians, as a contribution to the Nova Scotia government's public consultation process."

Background – The Nova Scotia government committed to establishing a "large" protected wilderness area on public lands within, and near, the Chignecto Game Sanctuary in October 2009. This kick-started a public review session of 35,000 hectares of public land which culminated in the recent release of a candidate protected area boundary.

In April 2011, the candidate boundary was released by the Nova Scotia government for two proposed wilderness areas for Chignecto, totalling 25,329 hectares in size. This initiated an additional round of public consultation. Wilderness areas prohibit industrial activities, such as forestry and mining, but allow for continued use by the general public, including for wilderness recreation.

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About GFWC – Global Forest Watch Canada provides access to more complete information about development activities in Canada's forests and their environmental impacts. "We are convinced that providing greater information about Canada's forests will lead to better decision-making on forest management and use, which ultimately will result in forest management regimes that provide a full range of benefits for both present and future generations."

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