



Environmental Law Centre

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Environmental Law Centre calls on Government of Alberta to improve environmental rights for all Albertans

SEPTEMBER 29, 2017 – (Edmonton, AB) The Environmental Law Centre (ELC) is calling on Premier Notley and the Government of Alberta to enact laws that will define and protect all Albertans rights to a healthy environment.

The ELC, a long-standing charity based in Edmonton, has released its most recent report [A Road Map for Environmental Rights in Alberta: Rights for a Sustainable Future](#) that recommends adopting a provincial Environmental Bill of Rights. An Environmental Bill of Rights would define specific rights that ensure a clean and healthy environment in Alberta for generations to come.

The ELC's report recommends a path for invigorating the rights of individual Albertans that:

1. Allow for meaningful participation in environmental decision making, including decisions about water, air, parks and other public land;
2. Provide citizens with enforcement tools; and
3. Provide third party oversight and review of environmental laws and policies.

“Current and future generations of Albertans should feel secure in the knowledge that their laws will provide them with clean water, clean air, and healthy land and forests” notes Jason Unger, Executive Director of the ELC. “From landowners to municipal water users, most but not all Albertans benefit from a clean environment. Now is the opportune time to bring in a bill that will help remedy existing environmental problems while also securing and maintaining the environment for the future.”

“Existing laws in Alberta provide us with some rights in this vein; however, an Environmental Bill of Rights will strengthen environmental quality and grant citizens the ability to enforce environmental standards,” Unger notes. “We mustn't assume the environment will maintain itself and we should embrace our roles as citizens of Alberta to secure our natural assets.”

The ELC report is a first step in laying out the key legislative directions that are needed. This is part of an ongoing project, and further reports and recommendations will be published over the next year.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CENTRE:

The Environmental Law Centre (ELC), a public interest environmental law charity, believes that law is the one of the most powerful tools to protect the environment. Since it was founded in 1982, the ELC has been and continues to be Alberta's only registered charity dedicated to providing credible, comprehensive and objective legal information regarding natural resources, energy and environmental law, policy and regulation in the Province of Alberta. The ELC's mission is to educate and champion for strong laws and rights so all Albertans can enjoy clean water, clean air and a healthy environment.

Blog: <http://elc.ab.ca/blog/>

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Charitable Registration #11890 0679 RR0001

The Environmental Law Centre would like to thank the Catherine Donnelly Foundation for providing funding for the assessment of environmental rights in Alberta and road map to environmental rights within the province. This work is in support of enacting laws that will foster environmental quality for future generations of Albertans.