



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Goat River in Robson Valley makes Most Endangered Rivers list

The Goat River near McBride BC, received considerable recognition this week when it was mentioned in the B.C. Outdoor Recreation Council's (ORC) annual list of imperiled rivers, "BC's Most Endangered Rivers of 2000." According to the ORC, the entire Fraser River is rated as the fourth most endangered river in the province, due in a large part to concerns about extensive logging in its headwaters, notably the Goat River.

A pristine wilderness and important piece of British Columbia history will be lost forever if the BC government does not act soon to protect it. The upper Goat River is one of the only intact wilderness watersheds of any size remaining in the headwaters of the Fraser River, but it's tranquility could be shattered by the roar of bulldozers and chainsaws this summer.

"The Goat River provides a critical wildlife corridor across the Cariboo Mountains, connecting Bowron Lakes Provincial Park with the Rocky Mountain Trench," says Roy Howard of the Fraser Headwaters Alliance (FHA). "It is also the only undeveloped watershed in the Robson Valley Forest District that supports Chinook salmon spawning, providing a much needed baseline to compare with the logged watersheds in the region," adds Howard.

Although recommended for protection by nearly half of the interest groups at the Robson Valley LRMP planning table, the Goat watershed has since been almost completely committed by government to industrial forestry. A proposed logging road would run right along the banks of the river in some spots – in clear contravention of the Forest Practices Code – thus ensuring the destruction of critical spawning beds, and overall water quality.

Logging roads and cut blocks would also obliterate what remains of a recently restored historic gold-rush pack trail that ran from the mouth of the Goat River on the upper Fraser all the way to Barkerville, a potential boon to tourism, according to Howard.

"The public is becoming quite concerned about the values about to be lost in the Fraser headwaters region," says Howard. "The BC government needs to designate the Goat River as a protected area. This must be done immediately, before the wilderness is permanently destroyed by logging roads and clearcuts."

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