

*Adjournment Debate*

tain wolf. That is a very rare animal indeed to be seen in the mountains of southern British Columbia. In addition, there are such game as the Rocky Mountain bighorn, the Rocky Mountain goat, elk and deer. To clearcut that area would create an enormous disruption of the game patterns that move not only in the Akamina-Kishinena, but from that area into Waterton Lakes Park and indeed into the United States and Glacier Park.

I have been assured by Congressman Baucus of Montana of his very real concerns, the concerns of the state of Montana and the federal government of the United States, regarding a proposal to clearcut this area. I am sure we will see a response from the American government expressing their concern and recognizing their limits. They will express their concerns to the province of British Columbia regarding any interference with the wildlife in that area which is so closely associated with and adjacent to Waterton in Glacier National Park.

These animals know no boundary. They move back and forth in these areas, as is their migratory pattern and as the supply of food requires. Recently the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment while in Invermere, B.C. came out four square in opposition to the Kootenay River diversion. This is a provincial proposal. It is part of the Columbia River treaty, but is a responsibility of the provincial government. Yet the minister has taken it upon himself, and I am pleased to see him exercise his concern, to state unequivocally his opposition to the Kootenay River diversion. On a project of such a grand scale, involving such an impact, the minister is prepared to speak; but on an issue of lesser consequence to him, but one which, nevertheless, is of major consequence to many—the protection of wildlife in an area immediately adjacent to and forming part of a national park—we find the minister standing mute or intimating that it is outside the ambit of his responsibility. So also, for that matter, is the Kootenay River diversion project.

● (2217)

I must again ask the Minister of State (Environment) to summon up his courage and write a letter to the minister of forests and to the minister of recreation and conservation in the provincial government and to support his officials in the Canadian Wildlife Service as well as his colleague the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, who is responsible for the national parks, letting them know he has a real concern for what is going to happen to the wildlife in the Akamina-Kishinena and asking for their views.

**Mr. Mike Landers (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Environment)):** Mr. Speaker, the whole subject of the Akimena-Kishinena watershed, while one of environmental interest, is primarily a provincial responsibility. However,

because of representations made by the U.S. state department, the government is examining the course of action it should take in the matter.

This triangular tract of British Columbia land wedged between Waterton Lakes National Park and the U.S. border has been found to be infested with the mountain pine beetle and consequently it has been proposed that the diseased lodge pole pines be salvaged. As it stands now, the matter is before the environment and land use committee which is made up of seven B.C. cabinet ministers, including the minister of recreation and conservation. This committee will make the decision on whether or not to accept the recommendation. When made, the decision will be binding.

The minister has confidence in the British Columbia environmental assessment regulations, which he believes to be sufficiently strong, and he is certain the committee will take into account not only the impact on wildlife but the effects on other aspects of the environment.

Fisheries and Environment Canada has noted the following facts about the area in undertaking its Canada land inventory. First, the area has little significance as far as water fowl are concerned. Second, part of the area is an important wintering range for elk. It is anticipated that as long as the land does not erode and some cover remains, these elk can continue in the area. As long as the elk and other small mammals remain, wolves will stay in the area. The same is true of grizzly bears, though they are known to travel long distances in any case.

It is understood that the cutting will be phased—it was already begun some time ago in the Sage Creek area. Cut areas will have time to regenerate before other areas are cut. Thus, wildlife can be accommodated. The opening up of the area to new growth can actually benefit wildlife.

The minister recognizes that the area was designated as a recreational preserve in 1956 and can appreciate the emotional impact of cutting trees there. Even now the Pacific Forest Research Centre of Environment Canada is assisting the B.C. forest service in a search for alternative methods to control the pine beetle. I hope they succeed.

Though I appreciate the hon. member's concern, our course of action cannot be dictated by the immediate need to answer the question. Rather, it must be determined by the long term well-being of our environment, and that will take more time to assess. All I can say now is that we are keeping an eye on the situation.

**Mr. Brisco:** A good reply!

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner):** Order, please. The motion to adjourn is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 2 p.m.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.20 p.m.