

Toronto, July 18

Mayor Jim Watson,
110 Laurier Avenue West,
Ottawa,
ON K1P 1J1

Dear Mayor Watson,

I am writing to add my voice to the chorus of opposition which has arisen in relation to the clearcutting of the South March Highlands.

As you are aware, no fewer than 5 Algonquin First Nations have registered their opposition. The Council of Canadians, David Suzuki Foundation, United Church of Canada, Sierra Club of Canada, along with a vast array of local community organisations and elected politicians, have likewise articulated their very real concerns regarding the potentially tragic consequences of this project.

The proposed development will not only destroy a significant portion of this unique old growth forest, but will in addition deplete its remaining capacity to function as a wilderness area capable of supporting biodiversity and endangered species. The David Suzuki Foundation has publically stated that the area stands out for the richness of its plant diversity, with 30 distinct ecotypes of vegetation, consisting of 440 native vascular plants, of which 2 are endangered species, 6 are provincially rare, 64 are regionally rare, and 50 are uncommon to the City of Ottawa.

An independent archaeological study commissioned by the Algonquins of Ontario found that the area has “high potential” for significant aboriginal artifacts. Ignoring the evident historical significance of the area would not be a prudent course of action. On the contrary, this course of action disregards the Land Claims and aspirations of the Algonquins.

In the words of the Algonquin Elder, Grandfather William Commanda, OC: “beyond its archaeological history, this is a living temple, a place of *Manitou*, a special place of nature, and that precious reality also demands immediate protection and reverence.”

Your Worship, I urge you to do everything in your power to prevent further irreparable harm to this ecologically sensitive and culturally significant area, which is so important to the Algonquin people and the community of Ottawa writ large.



GREENPEACE

Yours truly,

Shane Moffatt
Forest Campaigner
Greenpeace Canada

Cc:

Union-Algonquin-Union

Daniel Bernard, Algonquin Firekeeper