



**Jumbo Valley to remain wild through permanent retirement of development rights
Clears path for creation of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area
in the Central Purcell Mountains**

Cranbrook/?a·kiskaq#i?it, BC (January 18, 2020) – The Ktunaxa Nation Council (KNC) is honoured and heartened to announce that Qat'muk, which includes the Jumbo Valley, will remain wild. The Jumbo Glacier Resort, a source of great conflict for the last 30 years, will not be built now, or ever.

Thanks to a collaboration between KNC, the Government of Canada, the Province of British Columbia and the Nature Conservancy of Canada, development rights in the Jumbo Valley have been fully and permanently extinguished. Public and private funding has enabled the buyout of all tenures and interests held by Glacier Resorts Ltd. This has been secured through an agreement between the Province and Glacier Resorts Ltd., in turn enabled by an agreement between the Nature Conservancy of Canada (on behalf of the Ktunaxa Nation) and Glacier Resorts Ltd.

After 30 years of resisting development of these traditional lands, KNC is excited to move forward immediately to ensure effective stewardship and conservation of the central Purcell mountains, encompassing Qat'muk. The KNC is working towards the creation of an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) in the Central Purcell Mountains in southeastern British Columbia. An IPCA is distinguished by Indigenous creation and founded on the Indigenous relationship to land. It will serve to protect both cultural values and biological diversity in part of the Central Purcell Mountains for all time.

The creation of the IPCA will take several years of collaboration between KNC, the federal and provincial governments, and other parties. KNC envisions the area spanning about 70,000 hectares immediately north of the Purcell Wilderness Conservancy and encompassing the Jumbo valley and parts of adjacent watersheds.

Defining boundaries and stewardship objectives for a protected and conserved area is hoped to be underway by late 2020 through an agreement between the KNC and the BC government in consultation with local communities and stakeholders. Access in the area will remain status quo during discussions on the IPCA.

This initiative was made possible by a \$16.1 million contribution from the Government of Canada through the Canada Nature Fund. An additional \$5 million of funding has come from the Wyss Foundation, Wilburforce Foundation, Patagonia, the Columbia Basin Trust and Donner Canadian Foundation.

A celebratory event is being held in Cranbrook on January 18 to thank the many organizations and individuals who have made tremendous contributions over the years to keep Qat'muk wild. KNC also acknowledges all those who will be working together to realize a cultural and biodiversity vision for the Central Purcells through the establishment of an IPCA.

QUOTES

"Qat'muk is the spiritual home of the grizzly bear and of profound importance to our Nation. Grizzly bear spirit's home will become part of a larger Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA). So, today marks both an end and a beginning. Finally, we have achieved an end to 30 years of struggle by the Ktunaxa Nation and many other groups to protect Qat'muk and Jumbo, including court challenges all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada. But more importantly, today is an important beginning as we work towards developing a Ktunaxa stewardship vision for an IPCA in the Central Purcell mountains. We are deeply thankful that all of this is being made possible by very substantial financial support from the Government of Canada, the Columbia Basin Trust, the Wyss, Wilburforce and Donner Canadian Foundations, and Patagonia.

I am particularly pleased that the strong support and collaboration of both the federal and provincial governments is consistent with, and I think founded on their commitments to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

I also thank the Ktunaxa Nation's Qat'muk Advisory Council for all of their guidance and support for the work to protect Qat'muk."

Kathryn Teneese, chairperson, Ktunaxa Nation Council

"I would like to congratulate the Ktunaxa Nation Council and their partners, on their work towards the establishment of the Central Purcell Mountains Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area. It took foresight and leadership from local First Nations people and other communities to get to the point where we can now work toward conserving critical habitat for species at risk over this vast area, namely the Grizzly Bear, the Southern Mountain Caribou and the Whitebark Pine. Our government is proud to support you in this work by investing over \$16M in this initiative. By working together, we will reach our nature protection goal to conserve 25% of Canada's land, and 25 percent of Canada's oceans by 2025."

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada

"Today reflects the strength, tenacity and courage of Kootenay people, especially the Ktunaxa Nation. To be able to say that Jumbo, Qat'muk, will remain wild is a long time coming. That we are working towards an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area is reconciliation in action and it is the right thing to do.

Keep Jumbo Wild is no longer a bumper sticker pleading for the very center of our region. It is a reality."

The Honourable Michelle Mungall, BC Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

“Together with the Wyss Foundation, Wilburforce Foundation, Patagonia and the Donner Canadian Foundation, we are honoured to support the Ktunaxa Nation in their decades-long effort to protect and steward Qat’muk and its cultural and ecological treasures for current and future generations. Congratulations!”

Johnny Strilaeff, CEO, Columbia Basin Trust, on behalf of the non-government donor group.

“The Nature Conservancy of Canada extends our heartfelt congratulations to the Ktunaxa Nation in light of today’s announcement. This marks a significant step towards conserving Qat’muk in perpetuity, which will help to maintain crucial wildlife habitat connections while also safeguarding a living, cultural relationship with this land. We are honoured to support the Ktunaxa in achieving their vision of an Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area in the Central Purcell Mountains, and we welcome the opportunity for shared learning of Ktunaxa stewardship principles and natural law.”

Nancy Newhouse, BC Regional Vice President, Nature Conservancy of Canada

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