



## MEDIA RELEASE

### Critical Elk Habitat Conserved on North Peace Arm of Williston Reservoir

**For Immediate Release  
January 19, 2005**

**(North Vancouver, BC)** – The Nature Trust of British Columbia is pleased to announce that it has acquired 128 acres (51 hectares) of prime elk habitat in the Peace River region with funding from the Peace/Williston Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (PFWWCP). The PFWWCP is a joint initiative of BC Hydro and the provincial fish and wildlife management agencies. This latest acquisition is the perfect complement to two other Nature Trust properties totaling 1,868 acres (756 hectares) in the immediate area, also purchased with the assistance and funding of the PFWWCP.

Located between Adams Creek and Dunlevy Creek, this latest acquisition was one of only three privately owned parcels of land along the north shore of the Peace Arm of the Williston Reservoir west of Dunlevy Creek (one is already owned by the Nature Trust). The property is used extensively by Rocky Mountain elk year round, and by mule deer, white-tailed deer and moose. In addition, Stone's sheep migrate through the property between low-elevation winter ranges at Rainbow Rocks and 20 Mile Point. It is situated in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains where snow accumulations are relatively low due to the rainshadow effect and frequent Chinook winds—the perfect location for a variety of wintering ungulates.

Located in north-central BC, the Williston Reservoir is the largest body of fresh water in the province with a surface area of 1,773 square kilometres. It extends 200 kilometres north from Mackenzie with a 100 kilometre section, the Peace Arm, extending eastwards to the W.A.C. Bennett Dam near Hudson's Hope.

This property was purchased by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation in the early 1990s for the protection and conservation of elk habitat. The foundation sold the property in order to purchase several larger pieces of winter elk habitat. "The staff and members of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation are pleased to once again partner with The Nature Trust of BC in the purchase of land vital to the future of wild creatures," said Len McRitchie, President and CEO of Canadian Operations. "The Nature Trust has always been in the forefront on these ventures and we congratulate them for their ongoing efforts on behalf of wild places and wild animals."

"The importance of this property purchase to the integrity of the Peace Arm's north shore ungulate winter ranges can't be stressed enough," said Mari Wood, wildlife biologist with the PFWWCP. "These south-facing aspen and grassland slopes are the primary winter ranges for a significant elk population and the most southern population of Stone's sheep in the province. The slopes adjacent to the reservoir, almost as far as Dunlevy Creek, are now crown or Nature Trust-owned lands and will remain as un-roaded wildlife habitat."

The PFWWCP was established in 1988 to enhance and protect fish and wildlife species and habitat affected by the creation of the Williston and Dinosaur reservoirs in north central BC. For more information about the PFWWCP visit their website at: [www.bchydro.com/pwcp/](http://www.bchydro.com/pwcp/)

The Nature Trust of British Columbia is a leader in protecting BC's natural diversity of plants and animals through the acquisition and conservation of critical habitats and other areas of ecological significance. Along with our partners, The Nature Trust has invested more than \$50 million to secure more than 61,000 hectares (150,000 acres) of critical habitat throughout British Columbia. Keeping BC Beautiful today, and for future generations.

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