Canadian Boreal protected areas

Land use planning plays an important role in protected areas, setting fluid boundaries and bringing all the required parties to the table to plan land use for larger regions.
Read this interview by Yolanda Wiersma, Assistant Professor at Memorial University Newfoundland, who talks about the challenges of proactive sustainable forest management that complement protected areas in Canada.



1 Read the text and comment.

Forestry in Canada

So, what most people think of, when they first hear the term protected area, is a strictly bounded area, usually a park or a wilderness reserve or nature's protected, but there are lots of other parts of the landscape that function as protected areas, where ecological processes continue unimpeded, but those areas may not fall within the strict boundaries of a legislative protected area.
Particulars are important on a lot of fronts: for one thing they are the way that we protect biodiversity in perpetuity. But protected areas hold a whole suite of values. One is the biodiversity values, there are aesthetic values, there may be spiritual values, recreational values, just intrinsic values. There's been a massive sea change in the way a lot of forest harvest and forest management happens in the Boreal in the last couple of decades, and I think the forest industry in some cases is leading the way and does quite a lot towards promoting forest conservation, while at the same time allowing forced economic development and forest harvest; but there's still a lot of knowledge gaps that the industry has for how to do that well, and I think that's one of the largest challenges is just filling in the science to assist with proactive, sustainable forest management, that will complement protected areas.
Land-use planning plays a really important role in protected areas… planning, because protected areas don't exist in a vacuum. Protected areas interact with the land based around them. The boundaries that may look solid on a map but, from an ecological perspective, they're fluid. Animals don't recognise those political boundaries or those jurisdictional boundaries and ecological processes don't sow disturbances like fire, aren't restricted to within or without those protected area boundaries and so, to have effective planning for protected areas, you have to consider the land use in the land activities, outside of the protected area boundary as well.
Land-use planning is also helpful in that it brings all parties in a region to the table. So you have your resource industries, you have your First Nations, your local communities, tourism outfitters: the protected area advocates government, non-government, all at the same table, engaged in planning land use for a larger region. The benefit of land-use planning is not always the end result, because it's the plan, it's never… not always going to be exactly realised, but the process of planning is a valuable tool, because it allows for a big-picture approach and it allows for an integrated approach among all sectors.

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