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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Leading conservation group issues warning about “green” east-west power corridor**

TORONTO – In response to today’s planned *Green Power Corridor Summit* in Ottawa, a leading Ontario conservation group is warning caution about a proposed east-west mega hydro corridor that would bisect Ontario’s intact Boreal Forest. CPAWS Wildlands League, a chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, warns that building a mega hydro corridor accompanied by roads would permanently remove forests and fragment intact Boreal ecosystems.

“We want Canadians to know that this project is not a panacea. It must be approached with caution,” says Anna Baggio Director, Conservation Land Use Planning for CPAWS Wildlands League. “Canada’s Boreal Forest is the largest terrestrial storehouse of carbon on the planet. “Protecting the carbon stored in intact Boreal Forest ecosystems must be part of the plan for any new resource development project,” Baggio adds.

The proposed corridor would transmit power between Manitoba and Ontario cutting through a broad swath of Ontario’s Northern Boreal region. CPAWS Wildlands League urges governments to proceed with caution and says the construction of a corridor must meet the following conditions:

- **The project must demonstrate that it is better than alternatives.** Ontario needs a long-term energy strategy that addresses how we are going to transition from the current mix of sources to a sustainable energy future. Ontario is just beginning to explore options for conserving energy and the potential of renewable energy to augment supply. These options should be exhausted before plans that could destroy fragile northern ecosystem are trumpeted as “green” alternatives.
- Routes for the project should be considered through **already fragmented landscapes** before intact ones are permanently disturbed and opened up for further industrialization.
- If fragmenting the intact Boreal ecosystem of Ontario is determined after exhausting all other options, then it should **proceed only AFTER conservation-based land use planning** determines how to protect the region’s ecological integrity.
- The **carbon implications** of this project must be fully accounted for. This includes calculating the impacts of permanently disrupting carbon-rich peatlands and intact Boreal Forests.
- **Aboriginal Peoples** have constitutionally protected rights which require governments to fully consult and accommodate their rights, interests and concerns in advance of planning and construction.

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***Background- Is this green power or brown power?***

To be green, power must meet or exceed the ecological bar on two counts – how and where it is produced.

How power is produced dictates how damaging to the environment it is. Where power is produced *is equally as important* in deciding whether power is green. There are two components to be considered, where the power source is and how far it is from market or end user. Green power facilities can only be sited after completion of a comprehensive land use plan taking into consideration all land uses, including impacts to species and vegetation. In addition, to be truly “green”, facilities must be constructed close to the end user. Why? Long transmission corridors and transportation of power can be as damaging to the environment and as inefficient as a heavy power production footprint.