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PRESS RELEASE

Forest Department Receives Specialized Equipment Under Sustainable Development Project II

Belmopan. December 21, 2021. 4:45 p.m.

The Ministry of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, through the Belize Forest Department, today received a donation of specialized forest equipment from the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations under the Sustainable Tourism Project II (STPII).

Valued at over BZ\$197,000, the equipment will support the Forest Department in meeting the objectives outlined in its plans, developed in collaboration with the STPII, for the management of the Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve, which includes the 1,000-Foot Falls Natural Monument and the Chiquibul Forest Complex. The donation includes a series of electronic equipment and accessories (i.e. laptop, GPS, rugged cellphones, drone, digital camera and security cameras), beekeepers' equipment, a 2022 Kawasaki Mule PRO-FX 4x4, two 2022 Kawasaki Brute Force ATVs and safety helmets, a five-gallon fuel container and a vehicle trailer. Also included in the donation are two solar power units, one of which has been installed at the 1000-Foot Falls Natural Monument, which is now equipped with continuous power. The second unit will be installed at the Douglas D'Silva Forest Office after the completion of renovations.

The STPII is a five-year program funded by the Government of Belize and the Inter-American Development Bank through a US\$15 million-dollar loan. To date, BZ\$1.8 million has been invested in the Mountain Pine Ridge, Chiquibul Forest and Caracol complex. Three additional projects are in the pipeline to also benefit this area.

In attendance for the handing over ceremony were Hon. Orlando Habet, Minister of Sustainable Development, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management; Hon. Anthony Mahler, Minister of Tourism and Diaspora Relations; Nicole Solano, CEO in the Ministry of Tourism and Diaspora Relations; Raymond Mossiah, Chief Tourism Officer; Juan Rancharan, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, STPII; Wilber Sabido, Chief Forest Officer; John Pinelo, Deputy Chief Forest Officer; and staff of the Forest Department.

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