

Mr. Francesco Bandarin
Director, World Heritage Centre
7 place de Fontenoy
75353 Paris 07 SP, France

May 14, 2009

Dear Mr. Bandarin:

We write on behalf of a coalition of environmental organizations from Canada and the United States that has petitioned the World Heritage Committee to take action to protect Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park by adding it to the List of World Heritage in Danger. The following are key issues for the World Heritage Centre to consider when issuing recommendations to the Committee:

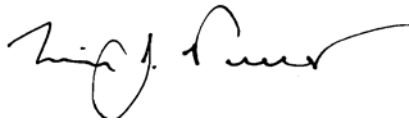
1. Waterton-Glacier contains some of the most pristine and protected riparian ecosystems in North America, as befits its World Heritage status. The western boundary of Glacier National Park is formed by the Flathead River, which originates in British Columbia, flows south into Montana, and is a critical riparian ecosystem of the World Heritage site.
2. Management of lands adjacent to Waterton-Glacier, including the Canadian Flathead Valley, must protect vulnerable species and habitats to maintain the Peace Park's values as a World Heritage site. The IUCN World Heritage Nomination Technical Summary of 1995 states: *"the essential point is that the [Waterton-Glacier] unit is less complete in its coverage of the ecosystem than existing World Heritage Sites in the region. This could make the unit more prone to loss of species in the long run unless extra effort is made to manage cooperatively the public and private lands that adjoin the parks."*
3. British Columbia's current land use regime, the Southern Rocky Mountain Management Plan (SRMMP) of 2003, endangers Waterton-Glacier by encouraging extractive industries on lands that adjoin the Park. It states at B.3.1 Minerals and Coal: *"Intent: Implement certainty of access for mineral and coal exploration and development: specifically, activities related to exploration and development of minerals and coal are permitted throughout all non-protected lands."* Further, Management Objective 3.1.2 states: *"Management intent and objectives for other resource values in the SRMMP (including, but not limited to, old-growth, connectivity, ungulate winter range, riparian, visual landscapes and recreation) will not preclude application for, or approval of mining activities anywhere in the lands [that are open to mining]."*

This land use regime is now threatening Waterton-Glacier by facilitating active exploration programs in the Flathead River valley for coal, phosphate and gold mining, and planning processes for coalbed methane extraction. Until British Columbia's land use regime is changed to protect the values of the adjacent World Heritage site rather than promoting mining, Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park should be declared a World Heritage Site In Danger.

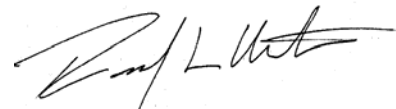
Sincerely,



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On Behalf of:

Canadian Parks & Wilderness
Society
Dogwood Initiative
Flathead Coalition
Forest Ethics

Headwaters Montana
National Parks Conservation
Association
Pembina Institute
Sierra Club BC

Wilderness Society
Wildsight
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation
Initiative