

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 5, 2007

The Honorable Michael Wilson  
Ambassador  
Canadian Embassy  
501 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20001-2111

Dear Ambassador Wilson:

The Waterton Glacier International Peace Park is a testament to the shared outdoor heritage of Canada and the United States. These parks are also important to the world community. In 1976, Glacier was designated a Biosphere Reserve by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). UNESCO inscribed Waterton Glacier International Peace Park as a World Heritage Site in 1995. As the 75th Anniversary of the world's first international peace park approaches, we must recommit ourselves to conserve this unique area.

The proposed developments in the North Fork of the Flathead River, including the Cline Mine and British Petroleum coal bed methane project, threaten this valuable legacy of cooperation and conservation. While we are pleased that the Canadian government has agreed to conduct a federal level environmental assessment, greater precautions must be taken. We are writing to urge the Canadian government to allow for an international joint review panel to participate in the federal environmental assessment.

Our mutual obligation to protect this area is clear. Article 2 of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention defines a "natural heritage" site as one "of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science, conservation or natural beauty." Article 6, Section 1 of the Convention then states that such a site "constitutes a world heritage for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to cooperate." Article 6, Section 3 elaborates that each state agreeing to the Convention "undertakes not to take any deliberate measures which might damage directly or indirectly the cultural and natural heritage...situated on the territory of other States Parties to this Convention."

As the 75th Anniversary of the creation of the Waterton Glacier International Peace Park approaches, an international joint review panel as part of the environmental assessments for the proposed developments in the headwaters of the Flathead River would be a fitting sign of our continued cooperation.

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Section 47 of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act allows for establishment of such a review panel if "a project that is to be carried out in Canada or on federal lands and the Minister is of the opinion that the project may cause significant adverse environmental effects occurring both outside Canada and outside those federal lands." A panel convened under this law would give Montana environmental experts a seat at the table during the mine approval process, which is critical because any mining operation will have significant impact on Montana's downstream environment. It is imperative that a review panel examine the risks of large-scale coal mining and coal bed methane development upstream from the world's first international peace park.

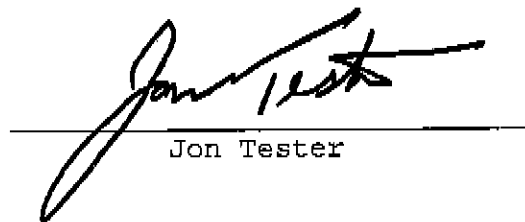
Montanans are outdoors people, and take pride in protecting our most treasured places for future generations to enjoy. Coal mining in the upper tributaries of the Flathead drainage would present serious risks to a valuable conservation legacy in northwest Montana, and would undermine the larger international effort to protect such spectacular places from irreversible damage at the hands of irresponsible development.

Thank you for your assistance in convening an international joint review panel in regards to the proposed Cline coal mine and British Petroleum coal bed methane projects. We look forward to working with you on this issue as advocates for protecting some of Montana's most pristine bodies of water.

Sincerely,



Max Baucus



Jon Tester

^cc: Condoleezza Rice, Secretary of State  
Brian Schweitzer, Montana Governor