



ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

"Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action"

The Honourable Peter Kent,
Minister of the Environment
Les Terrasses de la Chaudière
10 Wellington Street, 28th Floor
Gatineau, QC K1A 0H3
Email: Minister@ec.gc.ca

February 18, 2011

Dear Mr. Kent,

Re: "Glacier Discovery Walk", Jasper National Park

Alberta Wilderness Association (AWA) wish to express our intense disapproval of Brewster Canada's proposed development, the "Glacier Discovery Walk", in Jasper National Park.

AWA believes that development of such would be entirely inappropriate in Jasper, one of Canada's highest profile and most ecologically important national parks. AWA is entirely opposed to what the Edmonton Journal so accurately refers to as the "crass commercialization" of a national park. If such an offensive development is allowed to proceed, it would be difficult to imagine any future development in the park ever being turned down.

AWA also believes that implementation of the Glacier Discovery Walk would contravene Parks Canada's mandate. According to the 2001 Canada National Parks Act, "maintenance or restoration of ecological integrity, through the protection of natural resources and natural processes, shall be the first priority of the Minister when considering all aspects of the management of parks."

AWA finds that Brewster's assertions that the company is "committed to ensuring that all our visitor experiences promote Canada's National Parks values of environmental stewardship and ecological integrity" is quite ludicrous in the light of the proposed development.

AWA was closely involved in the public review of the Draft Management Plan for Jasper National Park in 2009 and 2010, and at no stage was there any intimation that such a major and inappropriate development was being considered.

Despite claims that the development will be built in a previously disturbed area, the project will require drilling huge holes in the side of a mountain that is currently home to bighorn sheep and mountain goats, among other flora and fauna. The volume of construction traffic that would be required on Highway 93 to construct the structure is daunting, and would clearly represent a substantially increased

risk of wildlife mortality on the highway, not to mention the considerable disruption of tourism activities for a prolonged period.

AWA believes that Parks Canada needs to reassure Canadians that protection of ecological integrity is still the priority in Jasper National Park. It is not Parks Canada's role to compromise this integrity in an attempt to boost the economic viability of companies operating in the National Park. AWA requests that the "Glacier Discovery Walk" project be refused immediately.

Yours truly

ALBERTA WILDERNESS ASSOCIATION

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'NDG', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nigel Douglas,
Conservation Specialist

- cc: The Hon. Michael Ignatieff, Leader of the Opposition
Email: Ignatieff.M@parl.gc.ca
- cc: Linda Duncan, NDP Environment Critic
Email: Duncan.L@parl.gc.ca
- cc: Ms. Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada
Email: lnc@greenparty.ca
- cc: Alan Latourelle, Chief Executive Officer, Parks Canada Agency
Email: Alan.Latourelle@pc.gc.ca
- cc: Greg Fenton, Superintendent, Jasper National Park
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