



Release Date: December 1, 2004

Icefield Helicopter Tours Renews Attempts to Expand Activity Over Wilderness

Once again, Rimrock Holdings Inc. (Icefield Helicopter Tours Inc.) has applied to Clearwater County to have the remaining restriction removed from their operating permit. If they are successful, there will be nothing to restrict the number of flights the company operates over National Parks and other sensitive wilderness areas. Your letters of concern helped to have the application refused in 2003. Once again, we encourage individuals to voice their concerns and help to preserve Alberta's wilderness from these intrusive activities.

BACKGROUND

Icefield Helicopters have been operating heli-tourism, hiking and fishing excursions over the National Parks and surrounding wilderness since 1999. In 2003, the company applied to the Clearwater County Municipal Planning Commission (MPC) for the removal/relaxation of a condition from Development Permit No.14/02 that restricts the number of helicopters the company is allowed to use. Currently, they use three, six passenger aircraft. The MPC rejected the application for increased activity over the National Parks and sensitive areas of the Bighorn Wildland. Reasons for the refusal included concern over the potential impact that increased flights may have on wildlife, the environment and recreational users.

Helicopter access must not be allowed where it will adversely affect wildlife, sensitive terrain or backcountry recreation. It is well known that noise from helicopters can disturb, stress and displace wildlife populations, particularly during sensitive seasons and at certain times of day. Disturbance and stress from loud activities can impede animal movement and daily activities and even affect reproductive success. Helicopters also disrupt the solitude and diminish the value of the wilderness experience of many users.

AWA and local tourism operators want increased restrictions placed on heli-tourism operations over National Parks and wilderness areas, including Bighorn Wildland, one of the last great wilderness areas in this province.

ACTION

Your letters of objection to the increase in Icefield Helicopter's heli-tourism operation over wilderness are needed. Written comments and concerns should be sent by December 14, 2004 to:

Land Use Operations Branch
Public Lands and Forests Division
Alberta Sustainable Resource Development
Third Floor, South Tower, Petroleum Plaza, 9915-108th Street
Edmonton, AB, T5K 2G8
Fax: 780.427.1158

and

Clearwater County:
Box 550
Rocky Mountain House, AB, T4T 1A4

For more information, please contact:

Lara Smandych, AWA: 403.283.2025 or visit www.AlbertaWilderness.ca
Martha Kostuch, A.L.E.R.T.: 403.845.4667
Alan Ernst: Aurum Lodge: 403. 721.2117



ACTION ALERT

**ALBERTA WILDERNESS
ASSOCIATION**



Page 2 of 2

Created: December 1, 2004

Email: awa@shaw.ca

Website: AlbertaWilderness.ca



Alberta Wilderness Association
Box 6398, Station D, Calgary, AB T2P 2E1
Phone: (403) 283-2025 Fax:(403) 270-2743
Toll free: 1-866-313-0713
