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Abraham Glacier Resort Finally Put to Rest!

Almost a year after being denied a development application by the Clearwater County, the Province has cancelled the land reservation for the development of the Abraham Glacier Wellness Resort; the 520 acre, full-service, self-contained health spa and resort located in the Whitegoat Lakes Development Node along the David Thompson highway (Hwy 11) near the Bighorn Wildland.

"Given the inappropriate nature and size of this resort, we are happy to see it go," says Lara Smandych, AWA Conservation Biologist. "We hope that concern for environmental integrity will continue to be a measure by which the county evaluates future projects for the area."

Recently, Martha Kostuch, president of Alberta League for Environmental responsible Tourism (ALERT) was informed by the provincial government that the land holding for the resort had been cancelled. The Province will not accept any new applications for the area until the Whitegoat Lakes Development Concept Plan is completed. The Concept Plan is a document that dictates what the county and province consider for development within the Node.

"This decision means that even if the Abraham resort proponent wishes to reapply, there are now several new applications ahead of him," says Kostuch. "We have suggested that the Concept Plan be adopted with modifications including the establishment of a wildlife travel corridor, limits of small to medium sized accommodation, and the elimination of some discretionary uses, including the establishment of a heliport."

Although the Abraham Resort has been denied, concern over future development in the area remains.

"Based on the deficient proposal we saw, the county did right in declining the application," says Alan Ernst, owner of Aurum Lodge. "We must ensure that high standards are also applied when reviewing new applications. This area is too sensitive and too valuable to be ruined by speculative developments and unsuitable projects."

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