

June 1, 2011

Dear Director of Manitoba's Parks,

I am writing to you to determine how mining activity fits into the vision of Manitoba's provincial parks. According to the *Provincial Parks Act*, "the purposes of a provincial park system include the following:

- (a) to conserve ecosystems and biodiversity;
- (b) to preserve unique and representative natural, cultural and heritage resources;
- (c) to provide outdoor recreational and educational opportunities and experiences in a natural setting."

Please explain how destructive mining activity conserves ecosystems and biodiversity? How does it preserve natural, cultural and heritage resources? How does mining activity support outdoor opportunities in a natural setting? It seems that mining activity is directly at odds with all of the above tenets of Manitoba's provincial parks.

The *Provincial Parks Act* also states, "parks are special places that play an important role in the protection of lands and the quality of life of Manitobans...[a] system of provincial parks will contribute to the province's goal of protecting 12% of its natural regions." How does mining activity in provincial parks help achieve the province's goal? We know the importance of protected areas – clean air, clean water and a healthy climate. Why is the government jeopardizing the quality of our provincial parks and protected areas by allowing park mining?

*A System Plan for Manitoba Parks* describes how "the park system comprises areas intended primarily for recreation as well as areas that have an important role in protecting natural landscapes." In 1960, the *Provincial Parks Act* expanded beyond parks as purely recreational, to include the newly recognized ecological values of parks. With this amendment, *A System Plan for Manitoba's Parks* explains how "existing resource use activities could continue." It is now 2011, park logging has nearly been eliminated, yet we continue to allow mining activity in parks? Why, 50 years later, have the 'existing resource use activities' not been phased out when both the *Parks Act* and the *Park System Plan* agree that the primary purpose of parks is for recreation and wilderness protection? This is a blatant contradiction regarding the purpose of Manitoba's parks.

Further, when the Resource Management Land Use Category is mentioned in the *Provincial Parks Act*, it says that its main purpose "is to permit commercial resource development or extraction in a manner that does not compromise the main purpose of the park classification." The parks that allow mining activity are classified as 'Natural Parks.' According to *A System Plan for Manitoba Parks*, "New Natural Parks will minimize the use of the Resource Management Land Use Category, and to the greatest extent possible, contribute to the provincial network of protected areas and provide outdoor recreational and educational experiences in a natural setting." If this is the case, how do you explain that 29.9% of Nopiming Provincial Park's area is staked with mostly recent mining claims? That is certainly not minimal use of the Resource Management Land Use Category, nor does it contribute anything to the quality of our provincial parks.

Finally, *A System Plan for Manitoba Parks*, acknowledges that mining has no place in protected areas: “In protected areas, logging, **mining**, hydro-electric development, oil and gas exploration and development and other activities that significantly and adversely affect habitat are prohibited.” Why do our parks, whose primary purpose is to preserve, allow for mining activities within their boundaries?

Considering that the provincial park system is dedicated to the people of Manitoba, they deserve an explanation as to why mining activity is still active in the province's provincial parks.

Sincerely,

Paloma Corrin  
Assistant Campaigner