

3-1-4-9 (9)

Date: Tue, 27 Jul 2004 02:16:52 -0400
From: "tim" <tim@raftalberta.ca>
Reply-to: www.raftalberta.ca
To: Commission@ottawa.ijc.org
CC: St Mary River
Subject: Tourism and recreation on the St Mary River
To whom It May concern.

I will be attending the public hearing on the St Mary river at the Lethbridge lodge on July 29/04. I am the owner/operator of Kimball River Sports, a company that offers whitewater rafting(class2-3)and fishing on the St Mary river, as soon as it crosses the Canadian border. We are the only whitewater rafting company available to Waterton, and the northeast section of Glacier National Park. There are three beautifull Canyons (24km/14miles) which provide awesome recreational paddling. This river provides recreation for 3000-5000 tourism clients, and approximately 10,000 private paddlers. The majority of our clients come from the U.S, and are staying in accomodations located on the Glacier side of the Waterton Glacier International Peace Park. It would seem that people are forgetting that this river plays an important part for tourism in this International destination, and holds some of the most incredible views of the parks. There are also many species of wildlife who depend on the fish from this river, such as the grizzlie bears who follow St mary river out of Glacier Park each summer. We also have Bald and Golden eagles who live on the waters edge, and an endangerd species the golden marmot who also live on this river. If the U.S/Canadian border did not exist, this river would never have been diverted in the first place. Some years recreation and tourism are severly affected, because the diversion is taking too much water late in the season. This negativly affects the fishing and recreation in our area, as well as the wild life. If the Treaty is re-opened, there should be a minimum level for the St Mary river to allow diversion. If the U.S is going to be allowed more water let them develop a way to take it when the river is high, not when it is at low flows. This River provides many employment, tourism, and recreational oportunities in this area, and needs to be maintained. I am willing to speak on behalf of the recreational paddling society, and of what a great importance this water-way is to us.

Sincerely,

Tim Ruggles
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