

## **BC Government Allows New Flathead Mining Exploration World Heritage Mission Will Visit Next Week to Investigate Threats to Adjacent Peace Park**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Victoria, BC**—The BC government, despite repeated assurances that there is no mining in the Flathead River Valley, has given the green light for new gold exploration to begin this fall, three BC conservation groups revealed today.

Permits have been issued to Vancouver-based Max Resource Corp. (TSX.V: MXR; OTCBB: MXROF; Frankfurt: M1D), one of numerous energy and mining companies that have laid claim to the unprotected Flathead River Valley in BC's southeast corner for everything from gold mining to coal strip mining.

“It’s misleading for the provincial government to reassure British Columbians and the world that all is well in the Flathead and claim there is no need for permanent protection, and then to turn around and encourage stepped-up gold exploration in this spectacular wildlife nursery,” said Sarah Cox of Sierra Club BC.

Fresh incursions into the Flathead wilderness come on the eve of a September 21-26 mission by the World Heritage Committee to investigate threats posed by Flathead mining and energy development to the adjacent Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park----a UNESCO World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve.

In June, the 21-member Committee voted unanimously to send the mission following a petition from Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Sierra Club BC, Wildsight and nine other US and Canadian conservation groups. The Committee also asked Canada and the US to work together to prepare a report--by February 1, 2010-- that examines all Flathead energy and mining proposals and their cumulative impacts.

“Even as the World Heritage Committee comes to visit, BC has sanctioned new gold exploration near Howell Creek, a sensitive headwaters stream of the transboundary Flathead River,” said Casey Brennan of Wildsight. “If the gold mine is developed, damaging by-products from acid rock drainage like mercury and other heavy metals could enter the pure waters of the Flathead River, named BC’s most endangered river in 2009.”

“The Flathead in BC’s Southern Rockies provides critical habitat for rare and endangered species moving between Waterton-Glacier and Banff National Parks, like grizzlies and grey wolves” said Chloe O’Loughlin of Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. “We must protect this essential wildlife corridor, which will give species a chance to adapt in the face of global warming.”

Conservation groups are calling for the lower one-third of the Flathead River Valley to be protected as a National Park, and for a Wildlife Management Area in the rest of the valley and adjoining habitat. The Flathead has the greatest diversity and concentration of carnivores on the continent, including many species that are threatened elsewhere such as lynx, grizzly, wolverine and grey wolf. The Flathead River Valley is home to the greatest diversity of plant species in all of Canada—more than 1,000 wildflowers species alone.

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**Additional Resources:**

**MAX options Crowsnest Gold Property; drilling planned for fall at Crowsnest and Howell gold projects in Southeastern B.C.** - [http://www.maxresource.com/s/NewsReleases.asp?ReportID=357440&\\_Type=News-Releases&\\_Title=MAX-options-Crowsnest-Gold-Property-drilling-planned-for-fall-at-Crowsnest-](http://www.maxresource.com/s/NewsReleases.asp?ReportID=357440&_Type=News-Releases&_Title=MAX-options-Crowsnest-Gold-Property-drilling-planned-for-fall-at-Crowsnest-)

**UNESCO Votes to Send Mission to Canada to Investigate Threats to Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park** - <http://www.flathead.ca/news/149>

**Salazar, Baucus, Tester Announce Study of Potential Threats to Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park** - [http://www.doi.gov/news/09\\_News\\_Releases/081109b.html](http://www.doi.gov/news/09_News_Releases/081109b.html)

**Canada invites the World Heritage Committee to send a mission to Canada to showcase Canadian leadership in conservation** [http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/cp-nr/release\\_e.asp?id=1413&andor1=nr](http://www.pc.gc.ca/apps/cp-nr/release_e.asp?id=1413&andor1=nr)