

Heidi Wiebe

From: Mary Granskou [granskou@magma.ca]
Sent: Saturday, January 28, 2006 11:10 AM
To: hwiebe@dehcholands.org
Subject: Comments on Dehcho Land Use Plan

Sent on behalf of Dr. John Terborgh (manu@duke.edu)

To Dehcho Land Use Planning Committee:

I congratulate the Dehcho First Nation on its far-sighted and scientifically valid land use plan. The land is the life support system for Nature, and Nature is the life support system for all human societies. The remains of failed civilizations all over the world stand in mute testimony to those who would sacrifice the future for the present. People whose lives are rooted in the land understand this elemental truth. They are thus wise to resist the temptation to compromise a time honored relationship to the land for ephemeral gains.

If there is a single overarching principle to have emerged from conservation science in the past 3 decades, it is that Nature needs space in generous measure. Healthy rivers, forests and wildlife depend on a web of biological interactions that are played out on a physical stage. That physical stage consists of dynamical landscapes that are constantly being modified by gradual processes such as weathering, erosion and stream migration and more rapid and sporadic ones, like avalanches, fire and flooding. These natural processes rejuvenate the landscape and create habitat for many plants and animals, but are often viewed as inconvenient for humans who fear wildfires and desire stable roadbeds and flood-free rivers.

The Dehcho First Nation appreciates these realities and has made a wise choice in allocating more than half of their land to be managed by natural processes. They are making an enlightened investment in the future, for free land is rapidly becoming one of the scarcest recourses on earth.

Respectfully yours,

Dr. John Terborgh
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Environmental Science
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