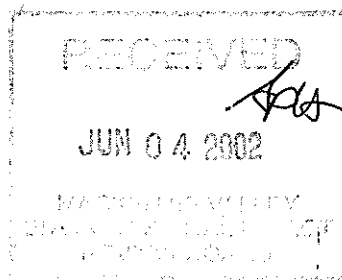




Parks Canada  
Chief Executive Officer

Parcs Canada  
Directeur général



MAY 27 2002

Ms. Constance Wolfe  
cwsj@whidbey.net

Dear Ms. Wolfe:

I am replying to your correspondence of April 10, 2002, to the Honourable Sheila Copps, Minister of Canadian Heritage, and to me regarding the proposal to re-activate a zinc mine near Nahanni National Park Reserve of Canada.

The mandate of Parks Canada is to protect and present nationally significant examples of Canada's natural and cultural heritage. Nahanni National Park Reserve of Canada was created to protect a representative portion of the Mackenzie Mountains Natural Region. Under the *Canada National Parks Act*, the first priority in all aspects of park management is maintaining ecological integrity through the protection of natural resources and natural processes. Mining and oil and gas exploration and extraction are not permitted in national parks or national park reserves.

Since the 1980s, Parks Canada has been on record as wanting to increase the size of Nahanni National Park Reserve to better represent the natural region and to enhance its ecological integrity. Formal discussions between the Deh Cho First Nations and the Government of Canada, represented by the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, on land claims and self-government have recently begun. Parks Canada has identified areas of high conservation value around the Park Reserve for possible inclusion within an interim land withdrawal under this process. The Deh Cho Lands Working Group included these areas within the first draft of their proposed subsurface withdrawal. This proposed withdrawal will be further refined based on consultations with the communities and stakeholders.

In order to ensure that the ecological integrity of Nahanni National Park Reserve is maintained, Parks Canada participates in the environmental assessment and review process under the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*. Participation includes providing technical information about the potential impact of external development activities on the ecological integrity of the Park Reserve. Other federal and territorial departments take part in this process according to their mandates. Parks Canada will continue to participate in this process and work with partners to protect the ecological integrity of Nahanni National Park Reserve.

.../2



A decision is pending with respect to the development of a zinc mine in the South Nahanni River watershed. The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board has undertaken an environmental assessment of preliminary and pilot phases of the mine development. Parks Canada and other federal government departments are reviewing the environmental assessment report. As requested, I have forwarded a copy of our correspondence to Mr. Vern Christensen, Executive Director of the Board, for his information.

I am pleased to report that a previous proposal to re-develop a road to the mine site to move a diesel fuel cache has not occurred because the fuel will be incinerated on-site by the federal Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Your concern about Canada's natural heritage is appreciated. I trust that this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Lee' or similar, with a stylized flourish at the end.

Tom Lee  
Chief Executive Officer  
Parks Canada

c.c.: Office of the Honourable David Anderson, P.C., M.P.  
Office of the Honourable Robert D. Nault, P.C., M.P.  
Office of the Honourable Robert G. Thibault, P.C., M.P.  
Mr. Vern Christensen

**Tom Lee**

10/04/2002 06:53 AM

To: BCHF-PARC ECO-PARKS/HullOttawa/PCH/CA@PCH  
cc:  
Subject: Protection of the Nahanni River Watershed

For appropriate action.

----- Forwarded by Tom Lee/HullOttawa/PCH/CA on 04/10/2002 07:48 AM -----  
"Johnson/Wolfe" <cwsj@whidbey.net> on 04/09/2002 10:36:36 PM



To: <pm@pm.gc.ca>, <min\_copps@pch.gc.ca>, <David.Anderson@ec.gc.ca>,  
<min@dfp-mpo.gc.ca>, <minister@inac.gc.ca>, <tom\_lee@pch.gc.ca>,  
<mvlwbpermit@mvlwb.com>  
cc:  
Subject: Protection of the Nahanni River Watershed

Dear Canadians,

In the summer of 1998, I finally canoed the Nahanni River. For years I had dreamed of doing this, and I was thrilled to spend that two weeks in the park.

In regard to mining and the building of a road, please review this idea most carefully. A full Environmental Assessment to address the OVERALL impact of the project should be undertaken with the goal of assuring that the ecological integrity of the park not be compromised.

This area, the Nahanni Plateau and the Karst Lands, can not be developed without doing just that to Nahanni National Park, which is also a World Heritage Site. I understand the pressure to develop, but it seems that your country has always had more vision than mine when it came to protecting national environmental treasures. I never thought I would be writing an e-mail such as this to Canadians. Please, please cherish your natural heritage...once it is gone, it is gone forever.

I have canoed many places in Canada: the middle track to York Factory; the Missinnabi to James Bay; the George to Ungava Bay; the Nahanni to Nahanni Butte and beyond. This summer I will spend three weeks on the Thelon River as a 60th birthday gift to myself. You have a magnificent land! You will be glad someday that you protected it well!

With respect and good wishes,

Constance Wolfe  
565 Olympic View Drive

Coupeville WA 98239  
USA

P.S.: Please pass this on to Vern Christensen, Executive Director,  
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board, as he didn't have an  
e-mail address that I could find. Thank you.