

PROTECTING THE WATER, WILDLIFE AND OUTDOOR HERITAGE OF THE CROWN OF THE CONTINENT.



To Read Back Issues of This Newsletter Click [Here](#)

Baucus, Tester Re-Introduce North Fork Watershed Protection Act
Legislation Establishes Reciprocity with B.C.

February 11, 2013

Dear Friend:

The following article was first published by the Missoulian on Thursday, February 7. We wanted to be sure you saw it. See the original [here](#).

WHITEFISH – Montana Sens. Max Baucus and Jon Tester on [today] reintroduced a bill that would bar mining and new oil and gas development on the North Fork of the Flathead River.

In announcing the legislation, the Democratic senators said the North Fork Watershed Protection Act, which has twice stalled in previous legislative sessions as time ran out, would complete U.S. obligations to a transboundary agreement that protects the Canadian and Montana sides of the Flathead River drainage from energy and mineral development.

The legislation would furnish permanent protections on the U.S. side of the North Fork watershed and preclude new oil and gas development and mining. The North Fork Watershed Protection Act would not impede timber production, hunting or fishing, the senators said, and has garnered broad support from Montana businesses and conservation groups alike.

“Wild pristine places like the North Fork drive our economy, attract tourists and make Montana a great place to live, work and raise a family,” according to a statement from Baucus. “There’s no place on earth quite like the North Fork and it’s our duty to make sure our kids and grandkids can enjoy it.”

If passed, the bill would build on the success the senators have had in persuading companies to retire oil and gas development leases elsewhere in the area, Tester said. Companies such as ConocoPhillips, Chevron and Exxon subsidiary XTO Energy have voluntarily relinquished more than 200,000 acres, or about 80 percent of the total leased acreage.

“Outdoor recreation supports businesses and creates jobs, but Montanans understand that protecting these areas is about more than just dollars and cents,” Tester stated in a release from his office. “It’s about setting aside places where we can pass on our Montana values to our kids and our grandkids, and I’ll keep fighting to protect areas like the North Fork that make Montana a special place to live and work.”

Although similar bills have garnered unanimous support in the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee in the past two years, the full Senate failed to take action on it, as was the case with most other lands bills.

Michael Jamison, Glacier program manager for the National Parks Conservation Association, hailed the bill’s reintroduction this session as appropriate and timely, coming as it does exactly three years after former Montana Gov. Brian Schweitzer and former Premier Gordon Campbell of British Columbia agreed to protect lands north of Glacier National Park from industrialization.



North Fork Champion
Senator Max Baucus has worked to protect the Transboundary Flathead and Glacier Park since his first days as a freshman Congressman in 1974. We look forward to his success in carrying "The North Fork Watershed Protection Act".



The Kid's Back
Senator Tester is back for another six years. We look forward to working with him to achieve lasting conservation solutions for the North Fork Flathead, Ten Lakes, and Whitefish Range.



"I can't think of a better way to honor that anniversary than the introduction of this legislation," Jamison said. "We Montanans shook hands on a good faith deal to protect the shared transboundary region, and this bill shows we're honest about upholding our end of the bargain."

Jamison noted that, in the past year, support for the legislation has been nearly universal, coming from cities, counties, Chambers of Commerce, leaders of business and industry.

"Even major energy companies such as Chevron and ConocoPhillips have thrown their weight behind the bill," he said. "This bill – which does not cost taxpayers a dime, and preserves all private property rights – protects both our outdoor heritage and our economic future for generations to come. We join both our Montanan and Canadian neighbors in encouraging its swift passage."

Baucus has long been a strong proponent of permanent protections for the North Fork of the Flathead River, beginning with his successful 1975 proposal to designate the Flathead as a Wild and Scenic River. In introducing the legislation Thursday, the senators vowed to continue their efforts that led to the return of more than 200,000 acres held by energy companies in the transboundary region while fighting for passage of the North Fork Watershed Protection Act.

~ We Thought You'd Like to Know



What It's All About

Saving the water, the fish, the wildlife in the Lower 48's wildest valley. British Columbia banned mining and energy development in their part of the watershed. It's time for Montana - and the U.S. Congress - to reciprocate and finish the job south of the border. (Photo: Garth Lenze/iLCP)

Donate Now

Secure donations through Network for Good

Multiple Fronts Need Multiple Donations

*Headwaters Montana is building a conservation future for the Transboundary Flathead. We're helping finish the work on the Transboundary Flathead; building support for a Whitefish Range Wilderness, and forging new ground to resolve the Ten Lakes WSA impasse. **Please donate to help with these programs. Thank you!***

Office: 545 Holt Drive, Bigfork, MT 59911 | Invoices, etc: PO Box 4310, Whitefish, MT 59937
info@headwatersmontana.org | www.headwatersmontana.org

This email was sent to .
To ensure that you continue receiving our emails, please add us to your address book or safe list.

[manage](#) your preferences | [opt out](#) using TrueRemove®

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

Network for Good.
EmailNow powered by Emma