



United States Department of State

*Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
Washington, D.C. 20520-6258*

JUN 06 2005

Brian Schweitzer
Governor, State of Montana
State Capitol
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, Montana 59620-0801

Dear Governor Schweitzer:

Thank you for your May 24 letter urging a U.S.-Canada reference to the International Joint Commission (IJC) regarding coalfield development in the Flathead River basin.

The U.S. Government has been following the activities in the Flathead River area closely and has stated to the Canadian Government that the United States considers the analysis and conclusions of the IJC's 1988 report to be still valid. The U.S. Government has also stated repeatedly that it would welcome discussions with Canada concerning an IJC reference on coalfield development in the Flathead River basin. Canada's position is that Montana and British Columbia should address the issue among themselves.

The United States will continue to monitor the issue and to assert the need for an IJC reference. Please contact me if you would like further information or assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Charles S. Shapiro".

Charles S. Shapiro
Acting Assistant Secretary