



Angling Outfitter and Guide Association of Alberta
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We strongly oppose the Government of Alberta's decision to rescind the 1976 Alberta coal policy and thereby allow open-pit coal mining operations in Alberta's Eastern Slopes (Grassy Mountain Mine and all future proposed sites). This decision negatively impacts the angling community, the angling tourism industry and will directly impact the members of the Angling Outfitters & Guide Association of Alberta. We are genuinely concerned about the impacts of coal mining to water quality in our rivers for ALL fish species, and to critical habitat for our native Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Bull Trout (Alberta's provincial fish). Both Westslope Cutthroat Trout and Bull Trout are already identified under the Species at Risk Act.

The Eastern Slopes are appreciated by Albertans and visitors from around the globe who travel in search of Alberta's wild places and wild trout. Allowing open pit coal mining in these areas does not support the protection of these locations for our Species at Risk, Albertans who recreate in the areas, Eco-Tourism, or the Angling Tourism Industry.

Open-pit strip mining destroys ecosystems. It changes landscapes, contributes to habitat degradation, and displaces wildlife. Evidence has shown that selenium entering waterways causes reproductive failure and body deformities in trout. Observing the effects of Selenium damage in ecosystems is happening in real time in the Elk Valley (BC) a short drive from the proposed Grassy Mountain Mine and is documenting real time declines in fish populations.

We question the Minister of Environment and Parks Jason Nixon's commitment to protecting Alberta's remaining wild places and wild trout populations when he encouraged foreign mining proposals (October 2019) long before Alberta's Coal Policy from 1976 was rescinded in June of 2020. This change to policy was made with NO public consultation which is unacceptable for such a radical policy shift.

We respectfully ask that you reinstate the provincial Coal Policy on open pit mines that had been in place to protect our headwaters and related ecosystems until after land-use planning in Alberta is complete. Only then should policy change be revisited, with thorough public and stakeholder consultation.

Respectfully,

Nancy Stourwich President

Angling Outfitter and Guide Association of Alberta
(AOGAA)