

UNION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA CONSERVATION DE LA NATURE ET DE SES RESSOURCES
INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES

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In your reply, please refer to
En répondant, veuillez rappeler:

3A.

IUCN REVIEW

World Heritage Nomination

1. NAME: Kluane National Park/Wrangell St. Elias National Monument
2. LOCATION: S.W. Yukon Territory, Canada adjoining Alaska-West Boundary
3. NOMINATED BY: Hugh Faulkner, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (PARKS Canada)

Cecil D. Andrus, Secretary of the Interior
(US National Park Service)

It should be noted that this is a joint nomination by the Governments of Canada and the United States.

4. DOCUMENTATION:

- i) Nomination received 2 March 1979
- ii) Legislation - National Parks Act, Canada (1976)
Presidential Proclamation USA (1978)
- iii) Illustrations and topographic map included in nomination form
- iv) Interim management guidelines (US section) and (Canadian section)

5. BACKGROUND:

- 1) The Kluane area was first set aside in 1942 as a Game Reserve, it was established as a National Park Reserve in 1976 pending resolution of native land claims. The National Parks Act applies to the total area of ~~5,440,000 ha~~^{2,201,500} ~~2,202,430~~. In 1972 the US portion of the proposal was withdrawn from Alaskan native land claims as potential federal lands. The National Monument status for 10,950,000 ha. was proclaimed in 1978. Cooperative studies between PARKS Canada and the US Park Service have been active since 1972.

ACCESS →

- 2) The total area encompassed in the proposal is ~~16,390,000 ha.~~^{29,000} ~~16,390,000~~ ^{34,381} ~~22,003,935 ha~~ ^{15,942} (i.e. ~~160,000~~ sq. km. or ~~25,600~~ square miles), or 500 km. long by more than 200 km. wide. For comparative purposes, Switzerland's area is approximately ~~16,000~~ square miles.

Includes GB & TAT

Mount Logan at 5,950 m. is the highest mountain in Canada and Mount St. Elias (5,490 m.) are included in the proposal.

JUSTIFICATION:

The area has been evaluated against the operational guidelines for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention as amended at its 2nd Meeting.

Outstanding universal value

Criteria (ii) Ongoing geological processes -

The Steele glacier surged over 8 km. during the period 1966-68. This is believed to be unique (ed. note: the Quarayag glacier in Greenland flows approximately 5 miles per year). Ancient shore lines are found in the Dezdeash Valley which was blocked by glaciation which later retreated and reversed the drainage system of an entire valley.

In the ice covered central plateau are over 100 named and as many unnamed glaciers. On the lower north western slopes a fine layer of volcanic ash from 1/2 to 6 inches in depth can be found at various depths in a continuous layer below the uppermost soil profile. This event occurred some 1200 years ago.

The region encompassing the joint properties is tectonically active in terms of movement of the Pacific plate (ocean crust) against the North American plate (continental crust). The result is continuous mountain building as the Pacific plate slides under the North American plate.

Criteria (iii) Rare or superlative natural phenomena - areas of exceptional natural beauty

The dozen coloured photographs (ranging from glaciers, carving off into the Pacific through mountain peaks at more than 5,000 metres, with more than three dozen river systems, combined with magnificent glaciers such as Nabesna, Hubbard and Steele,) attest to the magnificence of the scene.

Criteria (iv) Habitats of rare or endangered species of plants and animals

"There are few places in the world where the ecological processes such as predation, migration, mortality and natality are governed by natural stresses and the evolutionary changes in ecosystems".

Source - Nomination form (5)

Mammalian species include:

- 14,000 Dall sheep - the single largest group in the world
- 600 grizzly bears - the largest protected population in the world
- Wolves, wolverines, caribou, deer, mountain goat, moose - many endangered elsewhere are self-regulating here.

The avifauna includes:

- trumpeter swans, peregrine falcons, bald-headed eagles

Fishes include

- arctic grayling; kokanee; chinook; humpback; dog (Keyta) and coho salmon; (i.e. four of five species of Pacific salmon).

Unique plants include:

- Aster yukonensis, a Picea/Hypnum community, Astemisia fuscala and Astemisia rupestris - Oxytropis viscida are found.

The vertical zonation of vegetation from sea level to 5,000 metres is unique in itself.

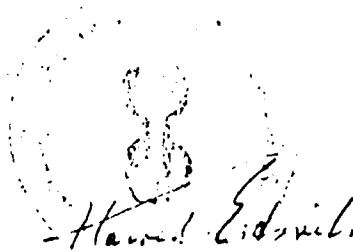
INTEGRITY:

The vast area of 160,000 sq. km. (25,609 sq. mi.) contains many complete ecosystems that are to a great extent inaccessible and inhospitable to man.

The combined efforts of the US and the Canadian Governments provide the manpower and resources for effective management and protection.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Kluane-Wrangell-St. Elias area should be placed on the World Heritage List.



Harold Lidzvik

International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

March 1979