

Received: from imo-d09.mx.aol.com  
by governor.state.ms.us; Sun, 16 Apr 2000 22:54:32 -0500  
Received: from RRosenhek@aol.com  
by imo-d09.mx.aol.com (mail\_out\_v25.3.) id z.b0.3e99e3a (4339)  
for <RRosenhek@aol.com>; Sun, 16 Apr 2000 23:20:50 -0400 (EDT)  
From: RRosenhek@aol.com  
Message-ID: <b0.3e99e3a.262bdd11@aol.com>  
Date: Sun, 16 Apr 2000 23:20:49 EDT  
Subject: Alert from Altai! Ukok plateau in danger  
To: RRosenhek@aol.com  
MIME-Version: 1.0  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="US-ASCII"  
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit  
X-Mailer: AOL 4.0.i for Windows 95 sub 146

PLEASE EXCUSE CROSS POSTINGS

THIS IS A LETTER FROM JOHN SEED OF THE RAINFOREST INFORMATION CENTRE HERE IN  
NEW SOUTH WALES, AUSTRALIA.

April 11, 2000

Dear Friends, I find it hard to find time to respond to action alerts, so  
many come through email. So I restrict myself to sending just one or  
two a year, and this is one of those. It concerns a very special place in  
Siberia, the Altai, home of many wonders including the highly endangered  
Snow Leopard. I visited the area in 1992 with Bill Pfeiffer of the Sacred  
Earth Network and Patrick Anderson of Greenpeace, met the indigenous people  
and helped the local conservationists as best we could to get both  
national protection and UNESCO World Heritage listing.

Our friends at the NGO "Fund for 21st Century Altai" (contact person:  
Alexander Yumakaev, email katum@ab.ru) are requesting international support.  
They are requesting that concerned organizations fax protest letters on  
official letterheads to authorities in the Altai (see 5 fax numbers at the  
end of this message).

Any individuals or organisations without fax facilities are invited to  
send their protest letter as an email to katum@ab.ru where they will be  
printed and then delivered to the relevant authorities.

They will also need funds to fight this awful development. We at the  
Rainforest Information Centre are sending them US\$500. Bank account  
information and a sample Endorsement letter are appended.

for the Earth - John Seed  
Rainforest Information Centre (<http://forests.org/ric/>)  
Lismore, NSW, Australia

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-----Original Message-----

From: Katun [mailto:katum@ab.ru]  
Sent: Tuesday, April 04, 2000 6:51 PM  
Subject: Alert from Altai! Ukok plateau in danger

Dear friends!

We urgently need your help! In Altai (mountain area in South-Western  
Siberia) they are trying to start a nature-destroying project - construction  
of a road and gas pipeline through the unique high-land Ukok Plateau.

The Plateau is situated in Altai Republic (an administrative unit in Russia  
equal to a state in the USA). Here meet the borders of Russia, Mongolia,  
Kazakhstan and China, and many rivers of these countries start here. The  
Ukok is a biodiversity center, there are about 20 Red-Book animal species and  
many endemic plants. This Plateau is also a precious archaeological and

historical site, it holds evidences of many ancient cultures that were living here in different epochs.

This unique combination of factors of natural and cultural value allowed the Plateau to receive in 1994 local protection status and in 1998 it was listed as a World Heritage site. Despite this, the Inter-regional Association "Siberian Accord" (uniting heads or official representatives of Siberian regions) decided to construct a traffic and energy corridor to China through the Plateau.

It is obvious, that this construction will

- 1) damage the unique ecosystems of the Ukok Plateau
- 2) lead to loss of historical and archaeological heritage
- 3) be a destructive invasion into the place that indigenuous Altaians hold sacred
- 4) be economically groundless, as construction and use of the road going through high-land marshes, tundra, permafrost sites and passes elevated more than 2500-2600 meters will require huge investments and endless repair.

In December 1999 non-governmental organizations and scientists of Altai Republic, Altai krai, Novosibirsk, Tomsk and Kemerovo oblasts wrote a collective letter to the "Siberian Accord" suggesting they examine an alternative option of construction, detouring the Ukok Plateau, going through Mongolia and using existing infrastructure. However, public opinion wasn't considered during the decision making process, and there has been no reply from officials.

We are asking you to support our fight and send PROTEST FAXES to the following persons:

Victor Danilov-Danilyan, Chair, State Committee for Environment Protection, +7(095)254-6824  
Zubakin Semen, President, Altai Republic, +7(38822)9-5121  
Tabaev Daniil, Chair, "El-Kurultai" State Assembly of Altai Republic, +7(38822)9-5165  
Surikov Alexander, Head, Altai krai Administration, +7(3852)22-8547 or +7(3852)38-0204  
Ivankov Vladimir, General Director, Inter-regional Association "Siberian Accord", +7(3832)23-7738

Just write 2-3 paragraphs on your organization's official letterhead how significant it is to preserve such a place, how bad the roads and pipelines are etc. Please send faxes as soon as possible. Please let us know about sent messages through katun@ab.ru or yumakaev@ab.ru .

Sincerely yours,  
Alexander Yumakaev, on behalf of  
The Fund for 21st Century Altai  
P.O.Box 845  
Barnaul 656015 Russia  
phone/fax +7(3852)222-371  
email katun@ab.ru

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BANKING INFORMATION FOR WIRING DONATIONS TO THIS CAMPAIGN:

1. INTERMEDIARY - The Bank of New York, New York  
SWIFT CODE - IRVTUS3N
2. Beneficiary's bank - Savings Bank of the Russian Federation  
SWIFT CODE - SABRRUMM

In favour of account 30301840400000600200, Savings Bank of the Russian Federation (Altay office)  
SWIFT CODE - SABRRUMM AC1

3. Details of payment

For Alexander Yumakaev

Address: Russia 656055 Barnaul, Ostrovsky Str., 21, Apt. 71

Passport N 602462

Account N 42301840402030000818/01

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SAMPLE ENDORSEMENT LETTER

Vladimir Ivanovich Ivankov  
General Director, Siberian Accord  
ul. Uritskogo 19  
630099 g. Novosibirsk, Russia

Dear Mr. Ivankov,

We are deeply troubled to learn that the Siberian Accord has decided to move forward with plans to construct a major road and gas pipeline to China through the Ukok plateau in Gorniy Altai. For several reasons, we consider this industrial development to be an unwise project which could lead to irreparable damage to the land and to the cultural heritage of its people. Please do not allow this road to be built!

As you know, the Ukok plateau is a sensitive high-altitude eco-system which supports many endemic plants and about twenty Red Book animal species. One of these is the snow leopard, a beautiful and elusive top predator treasured by conservationists for its keystone role in regulating the ecosystem and maintaining native biodiversity. A road and pipeline through its habitat could drive these and other creatures to the brink of extinction. The plateau is held sacred by indigenous Altaians and enjoys recognition for its archeological monuments, including a mummy of a Scythian princess. For this combination of factors, the Ukok plateau was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1998.

The industrialization of this territory by construction of a traffic and energy corridor would degrade vast portions of the region's ecosystem, threaten the existence of key animal and plant species, and destroy valuable cultural artifacts. We understand that specialists favor an alternate route detouring around the Ukok Plateau, going through Mongolia and using existing infrastructure. This plan, besides being more economically viable, would allow leaders like yourself to pursue an ecologically sustainable development path -- a path which further industrial development would prohibit.

Gorniy Altai is a globally significant territory, and we feel that we are cooperatively responsible for its future. We implore you to use your authority to stop all future industrial projects on this land and to do everything in your power to protect its natural and cultural treasures.

Sincerely,

NAME  
ORGANIZATION  
ADDRESS