

B.C. to ban mining in Flathead Valley

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<http://www.cbc.ca/canada/british-columbia/story/2010/02/10/bc-flathead-valley-mining-oil-ban.html>

B.C.'s Liberal government has announced plans to ban all mining and oil and gas development in the Flathead Valley, located in the south-eastern corner of the province.

It is expected the province will now have to sit down with those companies and negotiate compensation deals.

In 2003, the Liberal government's land-use plan for the area set mining as a high priority and said other uses such as wildlife habitat and recreation "will not preclude ... approval of mining activities," and oil exploration, gas drilling and coal mining were all proposed for the Flathead Valley in recent years.

Gavin Dirom, the B.C. president of the Association for Mineral Exploration, said about 10 per cent of the region has already been staked, and to arbitrarily kick them out is wrong.

'This is a political decision made with little regard for due process.' - *Gavin Dirom, B.C. president of the Association for Mineral Exploration*

"It's a decision taken with very little public discussion and input... This is a political decision made with little regard for due process," said Dirom.

One company has spent millions on a coal deposit in the valley and the province is going to have to compensate miners with claims in the Flathead, he said.