

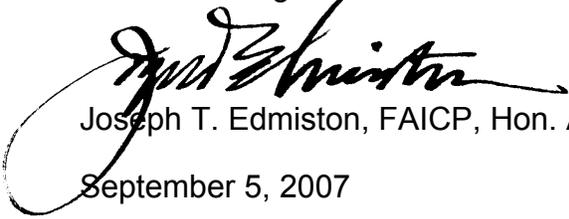


MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Governing Board

FROM:  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Hon. ASLA Executive Officer

DATE: September 5, 2007

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item VIII : Consideration of resolution authorizing attendance and travel to the International Forum on Geoparks: Interpretation and Sustainable Development, Yuntaishan World Geopark, China, October 11-14, 2007.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Governing Board adopt the attached resolution authorizing travel to the International Forum on Geoparks: Interpretation and Sustainable Development, Yuntaishan World Geopark, China, October 11 - 14 2007.

Background: Deputy Executive Officer and Chief of Interpretation Amy Lethbridge has been invited to participate in the International Forum on Geoparks: Interpretation and Sustainable Development, Yuntaishan World Geopark, China.

This is the first conference on Interpretation in China. Forum themes include:

- promoting research about interpretation and sustainable development, sharing information and experiences on Interpretation system and sustainable development;
- identifying major challenges about interpretation and sustainable development that Geoparks are facing and ways to overcome such challenges;
- facilitating communication and networking among geographers and educators about Geoparks;
- raising public awareness on interpretation and sustainable development in Geoparks.

A "World GeoPark" is a designation granted to an area unique for its geological and/or geomorphological heritage in terms of scientific rarity, aesthetic appeal and educational value. The key functions of a GeoPark are to protect the geological heritage, promote geology to the public and to use geology and other aspects of its natural and cultural heritage to promote sustainable economic development (normally through tourism). Lethbridge has specifically been asked to write an article

and give a power point on using interpretation to urban audiences and how to use interpretation to preserve resources, inspire future preservation of resources and make sure that public natural areas are relevant and accessible to those same urban populations. She will also be on a panel with representatives from federal agencies of US and Europe - the MRCA will be the only regional agency represented, but has been included because of its experience in serving large urban populations as well as its interpretive training program.

Other participants in the forum include:

- Executive Members of IGU
- Representatives of Geoparks
- Representatives of National Parks in U.S.A., Germany, U.K etc.
- Representatives of United Nations University
- UN agencies including UNESCO , UNEP etc.
- Experts on Interpretation and regional sustainable development in the world
- Representatives of national and selected local governments in China

All Lethbridge's expenses, including food and lodging, will be paid for by Beijing Normal University upon arrival in China. This authorization is for travel expenses related to the Yuntaishan World Geopark and will not exceed \$2,000.