



International Crane Foundation

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Founded in 1973 by
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and George Archibald, Ph.D.

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February 28, 2008

Mr. Lee Myung-bak
President
Republic of Korea
The Blue House
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Dear Honorable President Lee Myung-bak,

Like our complex circulatory system that supports human life, rivers and their networks of tributaries sustain the lives of landscapes. As a hemorrhage can claim a human life, the destruction of a river can kill a complex ecosystem of plants and animals. Humans now have the power to destroy these communities that have taken millennia to evolve. It is our responsibility to protect these priceless ecosystems that are vital to all forms of life including that of humans.

Since 1974, I have been visiting to your beautiful country to study White-naped Cranes that spend the winter on the estuaries of the Han and Nakdong rivers. On the mudflats of the upper tidal zones a mixture of fresh and salt water and periods of exposure and inundation create ideal conditions for the growth of sedges and grasses whose tubers and seeds are the food of White-naped Cranes from October through March. The proposed Great Korea Canal Project will destroy the habitat of the White-naped Cranes and a plethora of other forms of life.

I am certain the 9,000 members of the International Crane Foundation and millions of other conservationists worldwide, join me in expressing our opposition of the Great Korea Canal Project and its destruction of the fragile ecosystems of which the Han and Nakdong rivers are life-giving arteries. Through eons of time, the forces of nature have created the complex and beautiful Han and the Nakdong rivers. I hope that future generations will remember us for what we conserved rather than what we destroyed.

Sincerely yours,

George Archibald
Co-founder