



Waterton Lakes National Park

Waterton Lakes National Park is one of the most scenic areas in Canada. The first European to see it, in 1858, was Thomas Blakiston, a member of the Palliser Expedition who broke away from his colleagues to explore southern Alberta. He named the park after Charles Waterton, a British scientist.

The area first became a park in 1895, but has almost lost its protection twice. In the early 1900s, oil was discovered in Waterton, and the first oil well in western Canada was installed. Plans were made for a big town called Oil City, but the well soon dried up. In the 1920s, farmers in southern Alberta wanted to dam the lakes for irrigation during a drought, and the park nearly lost its protected status. However, the drought ended before it could happen.

Today it is part of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park with the United States, and has been a World Heritage Site since 1995. More than 400,000 people visit the park every year.

