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August 30, 2012

Payson R. Stevens
Friends of GHNP
P.O. Box 810
Del Mar, CA 92014

Dear Payson,

From the moment I entered the Great Himalayan National Park (GHNP), the park's beauty and splendor captivated me. The GHNP attracted me to Southeast Asia; I joined an expedition into the park's wilderness with the promise of a (successful) attempt at a first ascent of Chakri Peak in the Valley of the Gods, past the source of the Thirthan River. That preview of serious mountaineering in such an untouched paradise compelled me to introduce my husband to this place. We look forward to our first joint trip to GHNP this October.

I enjoy exploring the towering heights of the Himalayas. Treks to Annapurna South's base camp and across the Kumla Pass from Himachal Pradesh into Jammu & Kashmir created cherished memories. What draws me back to GHNP, however, is a unique melding of awesome scenery and the preservation of local culture. As we trekked through the GHNP Ecozone surrounding the park, we appreciated the preservation of the *devta* (deity) traditions undergirding much of daily life. For example, before entering the park, our guides hung metal objects on a tree covered with similar items, paying homage to the gods they believed would guide us safely on our journey. The unique food, dress, architecture, and language of the park's neighbors make visits to the GHNP unrivaled. The local NGO, BTCA, aims to create livelihoods for those living in the Ecozone in order to preserve the native culture. Likewise, the strategic development of the GHNP Ecozone maintains the park's pristine nature. The organization Friends of GHNP ensures continued support from people of influence locally and abroad. These numerous forces set the GHNP apart from other similar endeavors around the globe; they ensure both the natural beauty and unique culture thrive to be enjoyed by generations to come.

With these factors in mind, I unreservedly and wholeheartedly recommend the swift approval of the GHNP as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Officials may contact me with for further understanding of my complete support for your proposal.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Spear".

Sarah Spear
Executive Director of Arch Grants & outdoor enthusiast

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