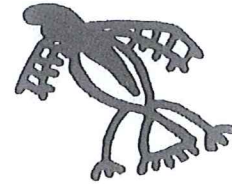


Neskonlith Indian Band

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Neskonlith Indian Band
OPEN LETTER

August 8, 2014

While abatement orders for the Mnt. Polley mine disaster in Northern British Columbia have been issued, impacts are being minimized by the mine and the province. It is impossible to fully assess the true nature and extent of impacts to the water, land, salmon and plants at this time. First Nations must be involved right from the beginning in the risk and cultural heritage assessments. This must happen before any projects are even proposed. Any impacts to the water affect the trees and riparian zones, the birch and red willow and plants along the waterways and headwaters which are water purifiers that keep the water safe to drink for all the flyers, crawlers, 4 legged, 2 legged and the medicine plants without these people can not exist and we have failed at our job as caretakers of TMICW (Mother Earth).

As with the Tsilhqot'in Nation and Northern Secwepemc, Neskonlith Indian Band holds both industry and government accountable but recognize a cooperative environment is needed at this time to address this issue. However, the situation at Mount Polley underscores the reasons why industry must work collaboratively with the Nations in which they operate. Failure to understand the importance of our land to us, both ancestrally and as a part of our daily livelihood has allowed projects to proceed without proper protections and restrictions. The multiple citations received by Imperial Mining in the years and months leading up this pollution event leaves us with no alternative but to reject mining activities until we are certain that companies will be held liable and that they are operating in compliance with regulatory standards and that these standards consider the value of our land to us. But are these standards adequate and enforceable? This should be questioned by all BC citizens. The overall failure to assess and manage the risks of mining, combined with the lack of oversight and analysis leads us to conclude, at this time and with the resources available, that mining activities, their operators and oversight create an unreliable situation for our Indigenous people and residents within BC.


With this in mind, it is in the best interests of all parties to ensure that proper assessment has and will occur at active and proposed sites, providing First Nations with site investigations, hydrology reports, and any other reports establishing the viability of a project. Further the company must share all information with First Nations and include First Nations as interested parties and funds must be made available to First Nations to hire and perform studies and monitoring for life of the mine, including post-closure studies and monitoring. This may also include the costs for studying human levels of heavy metal toxicity, which ultimately cannot be disputed until tests are performed.

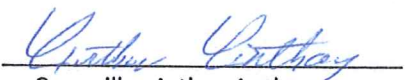
Again, we will not allow these projects to continue while we sit on the sidelines. We want to work together and our hope is that in the wake of this incident, it is clear that we are to be considered partners in this process as Title holders. We hope to establish open communication and make it absolutely clear that we place value on our land and rights that cannot be damaged or destroyed. Until this occurs NO mining or exploration in Secwepemcúlecw can proceed, the Mnt. Polley Mine incident must be investigated to the fullest including a Public Inquiry to what happened and what can be done to ensure this does NOT occur again. We must protect our water and our salmon, they are our life source. Our future generation's survival depends on this.


Chief Judy Wilson

Councillor Frank Denault


Councillor Joan Manuel


Councillor Karen R August


Councillor Arthur Anthony

Councillor Randy Sam