



TSILHQOT'IN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

253 – 4th Avenue North • Williams Lake, BC V2G 4T4 • Phone (250) 392-3918 • Fax (250) 398-5798

Press Release

For immediate release

Taseko Mines EIS on Prosperity deficient a second time; First Nations suggest investors and public take note

Williams Lake, October 19, 2009 -- The federal panel reviewing the proposed Taseko Mines Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project sent the mining company's revised environmental impact statement (EIS) back a second time, saying the EIS is still deficient. In the panel's letter to Taseko, it notes deficiencies in information requested about the proposed tailings storage facility and in traditional Aboriginal use of the area.

"Taseko Mines has gone public trying to point a finger at First Nations for delaying this important process," notes Chief Bernie Elkins, of the Tsilhqot'in National Government. "However, it is Taseko that has held up the process by failing to provide the panel with the information it needs to go to public hearings."

The Panel noted that Taseko Mines still has not provided the information it has requested on traditional "Aboriginal Fishery Usage" and "First Nation and Cultural Heritage." Taseko was required as part of its EIS to describe First Nations use of the area that its project will impact if approved.

"Despite spending tens of millions of dollars on its EIS, Taseko's treatment of First Nation's impacts is shamefully poor, as the panel pointed out back in June, the first time it found the EIS deficient," states Chief Marilyn Baptiste, of the Xeni Gwet'in First Nation. "The Panel encouraged Taseko to work with us and to fund traditional use studies to deal with this deficiency, but despite spending millions Taseko refused to approve a very modest budget for this work."

Chief Baptiste goes on to point out that as a result, the Panel found Taseko's EIS deficient a second time because it still does not provide sufficient information on the use of the area by First Nations. "By trying to skimp, save and understate the potential impacts of this project for First Nations, Taseko has delayed the review process. And the Panel continues to hold them accountable for this. Taseko is now paying for its refusal to work with First Nations."

Chief Elkins also notes that even if the First Nation's traditional use information had been provided, Taseko would still be holding up the process because of deficiencies in critical hydrology information identified by the Panel.

The Tsilhqot'in National Government says it is important that the public realize this process is not one that should be rushed through because of a bottom line. "We are in a process to decide the fate of an ecosystem and watershed – something that took thousands of years to create," says Chief Elkins. "This process *should* take time because we have serious concerns that this mine represents a disastrous precedent for mining policy in Canada and puts all lakes in Canada at risk of destruction for the storage of contaminated mining waste."

"First Nations are not the only ones with grave reservations about this proposed mine." confirms Chief Baptiste. "This project is far from a done deal."

-30-

For further information, please contact:
TNG Communications Department
Chief Bernie Elkins
Telephone: 250-392-3918
Email: chiefesdilagh@gmail.com