



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

Mining experts say Taseko has underestimated the potential risk of the proposed Prosperity Project to surrounding lakes and rivers; TNG concerned for future of salmon runs

Williams Lake, November 12, 2009 – A team of mining experts reviewing Taseko Mines Ltd.'s proposed Prosperity Gold-Copper Mine Project has concluded that the information provided to date “does not permit a reasoned evaluation of potential adverse effects to water quality, water quantity, fish and wildlife under variable conditions.”

“This study raises the alarm,” says Chief Marilyn Baptiste, Xení Gwet'in First Nation. “As the traditional caretakers of these lands and waters, we have asked the Panel reviewing this Project to demand more credible and accurate information from Taseko so that we can properly understand the environmental and human health risks that we are facing.”

The study conducted by renowned Colorado-based Stratus Consulting concludes that Taseko's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Project “vastly underestimate[s] the uncertainties in site water balance.” The report notes that Taseko has relied on limited data to predict or prepare for extreme weather events: “After operations, they propose leaving their mine waste in place with no active controls. One extreme weather event at any point in the future could lead to an uncontrolled release of mine waste, which could have severe adverse consequences for the trout and salmon fishery of the Taseko River.” The Taseko River flows into the Chilcotin River, which empties into the Fraser River.

The Stratus report states that because of the known impacts of hardrock mining, it is critical that Taseko Mines identify reasonable potential effects and include short-term and long-term mitigation and management measures and monitoring in its mine proposal.

“This report makes it clear that we cannot rely on Taseko's own assessment of the potential impacts of its Project,” states Chief Baptiste. “Since time immemorial our people have relied on the pristine waters of the Teztan Biny watershed and the Taseko River as a source of life.”

Stratus Consulting undertook the hydrology review at the request of both the Tsilhqot'in National Government (TNG) and the Williams Lake Indian Band.

The study comes on the heels of Taseko Mine Ltd.'s recent announcement to its investors of a 70% increase in the mineral reserves at Prosperity and an additional 13 years of proposed operation – extending the life of the mine from 20 to 33 years. Taseko stated in its November 2nd announcement the intention to “mine deeper, higher grade mineralization.”

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“Taseko is seeking approval for one project, while at the same time actively planning, and publicly announcing, a substantially expanded project,” says Loretta Williams, Teztan Biny Project Coordinator. “From our point of view, this looks like a classic ‘bait and switch.’ The public, and our people, deserve a full and proper assessment of the costs and benefits of the mine Taseko is actually proposing to operate.”

The three-member Panel conducting the federal environmental assessment of the proposed Prosperity Project has expressed similar concern. The Panel has requested clarification from Taseko as to whether its current EIS is sufficient to address the expanded project that Taseko recently announced.

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For further information, please contact:
Loretta Williams, Teztan Biny Project
Coordinator
TNG Communications Department
t. 250.392.3918, ext. 104
e. mining@tsilhqotin.ca

For technical information, please contact:
Amy Crook, Centre for Science in Public
Participation
c. 250.896.3627

The Stratus Consulting report is available at:
<http://www.raventrust.com/projects/projects/fishlake/teztanbiny/fishlakeresources.html>

Qualifications of the Stratus Consulting Authors:

Dr. Ann Maest is a widely published aqueous geochemist, internationally regarded as an expert in mine water and contaminant issues. Dr. Maest has served on numerous international and national committees related to mining issues and is an expert in sustainable development. She was a principal author of one of the most significant reviews of environmental issues at hard rock mine sites ever undertaken. Dr. Maest was selected as the Adrian Smith Lecturer in Environmental Geochemistry, at the University of Waterloo, in 1999. This is an award that's given every one to two years to an applied/environmental geochemist by a committee at the University of Waterloo.

Dr. Cameron Wobus is a geomorphologist and surface and groundwater hydrogeologist with an impressive resume of water-shed modeling and contaminant transport.

James Holmes is a senior hydrologist and expert in acid rock drainage, contaminant fate and transport.