

*Please publish my name and location along with my comments.*

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Re: The Raven Coal Mine proposal draft AIR

Denman Island is across the water from the proposed mine site and would be affected in many ways:

- ⤴ A highly variable rain of coal dust and other particulates from the mine and associated transportation. The coal dust will affect the health of people and all other organisms on Denman and Baynes Sound between Denman and the proposed mine. Effects may be direct on an organism's health, or more indirect due to long-term accumulation of dust or through subtle changes in the balance of food webs in our ecosystems. The draft AIR does include Denman Island in the RSA (Figure 5.2.1) as lands potentially affected by air pollution so clearly the proponent recognises that there is a potential problem here. Baseline studies must be carried out on Denman Island and other potentially affected areas as models do not adequately account for topography, tree cover and local climates.
- ⤴ There will be noise from blasting, other mine operations and mine traffic. These sounds will reach all of Denman Island (We here blasts from Texada Island which is much further away). However, Denman Island is not included within the RSA of lands potentially affected by noise (Figure 5.2.3) .
- ⤴ Negative impacts on the shellfish industry will have negative economic effects on Denman Island and change the ecosystems along Baynes Sound. All of Baynes Sound should be included in baseline studies and not the limited area shown in Figure 5.6.1.
- ⤴ Tourism will be negatively affected by the proposed mine. The pristine reputation of the region would be in tatters. Many jobs would be lost. Such negative economic impacts on Denman and elsewhere in the Comox Valley are not considered in the draft AIR.
- ⤴ Population loss and house prices. With pollution from the mine, and perceptions of environmental degradation, and a net loss of jobs (through impacts on tourism, shellfish industry etc.) it is inevitable that people will leave the area

I am disappointed by the lack of consultation with Denman Islanders in this process. The attendance of Denman Islanders at the recent public meetings attests to the concern among the people here. I therefore call for a Joint Federal/Provincial Independent Expert Environmental Review Panel with full public hearings (including on Denman Island) to determine whether this proposed mine should go beyond this pre-planning stage. A basic prerequisite must be a complete regional aquifer mapping and modelling.

*I am a biologist with a BA in Botany from Oxford University, a PhD in Plant Physiology, several post docs in soil microbiology and 17 years working in Canada and Germany cleaning up mine sites using natural processes. I am currently Lands Manager for the Denman Conservancy Association. I am also on the technical committee of the Comox Valley Coalwatch.*