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December 21, 2009

The Honourable Barry Penner
Minister of the Environment
P.O. Box 9047
STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2

Dear Minister Penner:

I am writing this letter as Chair of the Denman Island Local Trust Committee in the hopes that your government, in concert with the Ministry of the Environment, will evaluate the global impact of allowing Compliance Coal Corporation to extract 44 million tonnes of coal over twenty years, as unacceptable.

This proposed mine is located in the Comox Valley Regional District, a few miles west of Baynes Sound, which separates Denman Island from Vancouver Island.

Denman Island is the northern most island within the jurisdiction of the Islands Trust. The mandate of the Trust, to preserve and protect the environment for the people of British Columbia would be seriously compromised if such a mine was approved. The document, Raven Underground Project – Project Description, prepared for Compliance Coal Corporation (August 2009) identifies a number of potential impacts including air quality, noise/vibration, water related impacts, selenium mobilization and toxicity, acid rock drainage, human health and terrestrial impacts.

It is inconceivable that our Provincial Government, which just recently charged local governments to incorporate GHG reduction targets and the means to those reductions within their respective Official Community Plans, would, at the same time, consider allowing another coal deposit to be removed, processed and shipped across the Pacific to be used in the production of steel.

At present the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere is about 385 ppm (parts per million). Before industrialization it was about 280 ppm. Analyses of air contained in ice from the Antarctic ice cap show that there is far more CO₂ in the air today than at any time in the last 650,000 years.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's most recent assessment report concludes that the average temperature will continue to rise, but that the extent and the duration of this rise, and the severity of its consequences, depend on how quickly and how effectively emissions of greenhouse gases can be restricted and, over time, reduced.

Burning of fossil fuels, primarily coal, oil and gas, increases the amount of CO₂ and other gases and particles in the air. These gases and particles affect the Earth's energy balance, changing both the amount of sunlight absorbed by the planet and the emission of heat (long wave or thermal radiation) to space. The net effect is a global warming that has become substantial during the past three decades.

Global warming from continued burning of more and more fossil fuels poses clear dangers for the planet and for the planet's present and future inhabitants. Coal is the largest contributor to the human-made increase of CO₂ in the air.

In 2007, global steel production stood at 1.34 billion tonnes; producing one tonne of steel can release up to one tonne of carbon dioxide.

Industrialized nations are under pressure to cut back even more on emissions of carbon dioxide and other global-warming gases, while major developing countries such as China and India are being pressed to rein in their emissions growth. Environmentalists and poorer nations say richer countries should reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent or more by 2020, compared with 1990 levels, to avoid serious climate damage.

As I write this letter, the Copenhagen Climate talks have come to an end. Industrialized nations are being asked to take leadership roles in reducing carbon emissions. The world looks to Canada for signs of this leadership.

The benefit of creating a few jobs pales when compared to the environmental costs. The green economy is poised to create far more sustainable jobs in the near future. Please let us not continue to do "business as usual".

Sincerely,



Peter Luckham,
Chair, Denman Island Local Trust Committee.

pc: John A. Tapics, President and CEO of Compliance Energy Corporation
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