

Raven Underground Coal Mine Project  
Andrew Rollo, Project Manager  
Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency  
805-1550 Alberni Street  
Vancouver, B.C. V6G 1A5

Dear Mr. Rollo:

We are a Society dedicated to the protection and restoration of our local wild fish habitat. We do this through regular assessment of the health of our streams and wetlands; by designing and undertaking restoration projects, by educating the public on the importance of watershed resources, and by encouraging communication and co-operation in watershed management. This year we are celebrating our fifteenth anniversary. Over the past fifteen years we have made much progress, through the dedication and countless hours expended by volunteers and with the aid of significant financial resources by all levels of government and various other agencies.

The proposed Raven Coal Mine project causes us grave concern for the health and future of precious wild fish habitat on Central Vancouver Island. It seems like a monumental step backward in the face of all the good work being done by so many entities, including stewardship groups like ours.

Through this assessment process, we ask you to consider the following factors for the duration of the project and beyond:

1. Impacts to salmon and other wild fish in the freshwater habitat of the project area.
2. The potential contamination of the near shore environment in Baynes Sound and impacts to the migration of salmon and other wild fish.
3. The impact of 24/7/365 twenty year truck transport of coal from Buckley Bay to Port Alberni using a highway system that crosses many fish-bearing streams and rivers. How will the premature deterioration of this system and the need for remedial or new highway construction further disturb or destroy sensitive habitat?
4. Impacts to salmon and other wild fish from the coal handling facility at Port Alberni.
5. Fish impacts of ships ploughing through the Alberni Inlet and Barclay Sound.

It is well documented that salmon is a "keystone species" with many other species in its ecosystems dependent on it. We request a detailed assessment of the overall impact to these ecosystems, and to the individual species (plant and animal) within.

We also request that this assessment be referred to a joint federal/provincial independent expert Review Panel for full public hearings.

Additionally, that before any further consideration is given to the proposed project, we request comprehensive aquifer mapping and modelling of the entire Raven coal tenure be completed and publicly vetted.

Should this proposal proceed any further, we look forward to participating in a full public hearing in Qualicum Beach.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Pat Jacobson  
President  
Qualicum Beach Streamkeepers Society  
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